

THE IAN MACLAREN YEARBOOK



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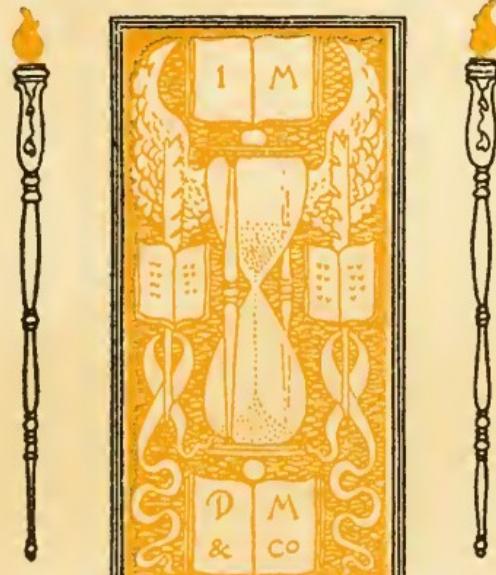
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The Ian Maclaren Year-Book



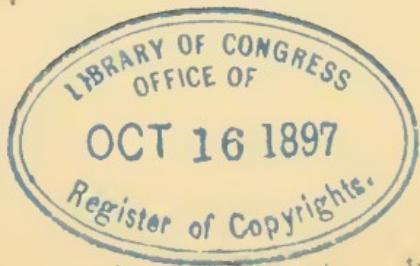
John Wilson

The
Jan Maclaren
YEARBOOK



NEW YORK
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D RUMTOCHTY in its length, which was eight miles, and its breadth, which was four, lay in his hand ; besides a glen behind, unknown to the world, which in the night time he visited at the risk of life, for the way thereto was across the big moor with its peat holes and treacherous bogs. And he held the land eastwards towards Muirtown so far as the Drumtochty post travelled every day, and could carry word that the doctor was wanted. He did his best for the need of every man, woman, and child in this wild, straggling district, year in, year out, in the snow and in the heat, in the dark and in the light, without rest, and without holiday for forty years.

A Doctor of the Old School.

January

H E could not make townspeople understand the unutterable satisfaction of the country minister, who even from old age and great cities looks back with fond regret to his first parish on the slope of the Grampians. Some kindly host wrestles with him to stay a few days more in civilisation, and pledges him to run up whenever he wearies of his exile, and the ungrateful rustic can hardly conceal the joy of his escape. He shudders on the way to the station at the drip of the dirty sleet and the rags of the shivering poor, and the restless faces of the men and the unceasing roar of the traffic. Where he is going the white snow is falling gently on the road, a cart full of sweet-smelling roots is moving on velvet, the driver stops to exchange views with a farmer who has been feeding his sheep, within the humblest cottage the fire is burning clearly. With every mile northwards the Glenman's heart lifts ; and as he lands on his far-away little station, he draws a deep breath of the clean, wholesome air. It is a long walk through the snow, but there is a kindly, couthy smell from the woods, and at sight of the squares of light in his home, weariness departs from a Drumtochty man.

Kate Carnegie.

January 1

THE world had its own idea of blessedness. Blessed is the man who is always right. Blessed is the man who is satisfied with himself. Blessed is the man who is strong. Blessed is the man who rules. Blessed is the man who is rich. Blessed is the man who is popular. Blessed is the man who enjoys life. These are the beatitudes of sight and this present world. It comes with a shock and opens a new realm of thought, that not one of these men entered Jesus' mind when He treated of blessedness.

The Mind of the Master.



January 2

“BLESSED,” said Jesus, “is the man who thinks lowly of himself; who has passed through great trials; who gives in and endures; who longs for perfection; who carries a tender heart; who has a passion for holiness; who sweetens human life; who dares to be true to conscience.” What a conception of character! Blessed are the humble, the penitents, the victims, the mystics, the philanthropists, the saints, the mediators, the confessors. For the first time a halo rests on gentleness, patience, kindness, and sanctity, and the eight men of the beatitudes divide the kingdom of God.

The Mind of the Master.

January 3

ON the first Sabbath of the year the people were in the second verse of the Hundredth Psalm, when Milton, with his family, came into the kirk and took possession of their pew. Hillocks maintained an unobtrusive but vigilant watch, and had no fault to find this time with Milton. The doctor preached on the Law of Love, as he had a way of doing at the beginning of each year, and was quite unguarded in his eulogium of brotherly kindness, but Milton did not seem to find anything wrong in the sermon. Four times — Hillocks kept close to facts — he nodded in grave approval, and once, when the doctor insisted with great force that love did more than every power to make men good, Milton was evidently carried, and blew his nose needlessly.

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.



January 4

“YOU ‘ll not leave without breakin’ bread ;
Y it’s little we hae, but we can offer ye oat-cake an’ milk in token o’ oor loyalty.” And then Bell brought the elements of Scottish food ; and when Marjorie’s lips moved in prayer as they ate, it seemed to Carnegie and his daughter like a sacrament. So the two went from the fellowship of the poor to their ancient house.

Kate Carnegie.

January 5

JESUS nowhere commanded that one cling to His Cross, He everywhere commanded that one carry His Cross, and out of this daily crucifixion has been born the most beautiful sainthood from St. Paul to St. Francis, from A Kempis to George Herbert. For "there is no salvation of the soul nor hope of everlasting life but in the Cross."

The Mind of the Master.



January 6

THAT minister who receives a body of people more or less cast down, and wearied in the great battle of the soul, and sends them forth full of good cheer and enthusiasm, has done his work and deserved well of his people. He has shown himself a true shepherd, and he had not done this service without knowing both the Will of God and the life of man, without draining a wide watershed of experience — from high hills where the soul has been alone with God, and from deep valleys where the soul has tasted the agonies of life — into the stream that shall be the motive power of many lives on the plains beneath.

The Cure of Souls.

January 7

CERTAINLY it must be useful for practical men, whose life-work is to be preaching, to compare notes on the various methods of preparation, believing that as the blessing of the Divine Spirit will only rest on the outcome of hard, honest work, the more thorough and skilful that work is, the more likely is it to be crowned with prosperity.

The Cure of Souls.



January 8

NEXT Sabbath the kirkyard was thrown into a state approaching excitement by Jamie Soutar, who, in the course of some remarks on the prospects of harvest, casually mentioned that Burnbrae had been refused his lease, and would be leaving Drumtochty at Martinmas.

"What for?" said Drumsheugh sharply; while Hillocks, who had been offering his box to Whinnie, remained with outstretched arm.

"Naethin' that ye wud expeck, but juist some bit differ wi' the new factor aboot leavin' his kirk an' jining the lave o' us in the Auld Kirk. Noo, if it hed been ower a cattle reed ye cud hae understude it, but for a man—"

"Nae mair o' yir havers, Jamie," broke in Drumsheugh, "and keep yir tongue aff Burnbrae; man, ye gied me a fricht."

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.

January 9

WHEN one is richly endowed and carefully trained, and has come to the zenith of his power, his sudden removal seems a reflection on the economy of God's kingdom. Why call this man to the choir celestial when he is so much needed in active service? According to Jesus, he has not sunk into inaction, so much subtracted from the forces of righteousness. He has gone where the fetters of this body of humiliation and embarrassment of adverse circumstances shall be no longer felt. We must not think of him as withdrawn from the field; we must imagine him as in the van of battle. We must follow him, our friend, with hope and a high heart.

The Mind of the Master.



January 10

NO man knew what the minister of Kilbogie might not ask — he was only perfectly certain that it would be beyond his knowledge; but as Saunderson always gave the answer himself in the end, and imputed it to the student, anxiety was reduced to a minimum. Saunderson, indeed, was in the custom of passing all candidates and reporting them as marvels of erudition, whose only fault was a becoming modesty — which, however, had not concealed from his keen eye hidden treasures of learning.

Kate Carnegie.

January 11

WHEN a prophet and his environment are adjusted, his speeches are re-issued with illustrations which have a very practical application to our day : when the Book of Ecclesiastes is referred to the days of the third century B.C. then its note is caught, and any man who has been wronged and embittered by political tyranny and social corruption has his bitter cry included in the Book of God.

The Cure of Souls.



January 12

"DIV ye mean tae say," as soon as Mains had recovered, "that ye've brocht naethin' for the manse but bukes, naither bed nor bedding ? Keep's a'," as the situation grew upon him, "whar are ye tae sleep, and what are ye tae sit on ? An' div ye never eat ? This croons a' ;" and Mains gazed at his new minister as one who supposed that he had taken Jeremiah's measure and had failed utterly.

"*Mea culpa* — it 's . . . my blame," and Saunderson was evidently humbled at this public exposure of his incapacity ; "some slight furnishing will be expedient, even necessary, and I have a plan for book-shelves in my head ; it is ingenious and convenient, and if there is a worker in wood . . ."

Kate Carnegie.

January 13

IT is a necessity of the human mind to theorise about truth ; it is a calamity to substitute theories for truth. One almost despairs at times because we seem the victims of an irresistible tendency to ignore the real, and to be content with the artificial. No sooner has some man of genius painted a picture or conceived a poem, or even made a speech with moral intention, than people set themselves to invent amazing meanings and applications, and raise such a dust of controversy that the original effect is utterly lost.

The Mind of the Master.



January 14

GRANTED that some people go to church to whom worship must be a vain show, and that others remain at home to whom it is a spiritual reality, it were quite absurd to divide people into public worshippers who are professional hypocrites, and private worshippers who are unattached saints. As a bare matter of fact, believing people do, as a rule, go to church, and unbelieving people, as a rule, do not : and in order to show that one is not using faith in a dogmatic but a vigorous sense, it may be sufficient to point out that on the Church — her teaching, her influence, her example — the whole system of charity and philanthropy depends in the Western world.

The Cure of Souls.

January 15

IT seemed to me, watching things in Drumtochty during those days with an impartial mind, that the Doctor, with his care for the poor, his sympathy for the oppressed, his interest in everything human, his shrewd, practical wisdom, and his wide toleration, was the very ideal of the parish clergyman. He showed me much courtesy while I lived in the Cottage, although I did not belong to his communion ; and as my imagination re-constructs the old parish of a winter night by the fire, I miss him as he used to be on the road, in the people's homes, in his pulpit, among his books — ever an honourable and kind-hearted gentleman.

Kate Carnegie.



January 16

IT might well seem that the using of his room were enough guerdon, but Jesus had still something in store for His friend. The last time they met beneath the olives the goodman had pledged Jesus to come to his house before He went to the Cross, and Jesus had kept the tryst, as all the Church of God below knoweth ; and then before they parted Jesus would pledge the goodman to visit Him in His house after he was done with earth, and one day the goodman kept this other tryst, as the Church of God above knoweth.

The Upper Room.

January 17

“WHAT richt hes ony man tae hand ower
the families that hev been on his es-
tate afore he wes born tae be harried an’ in-
sulted by some domineering upstart o’ a factor,
an’ then tae spend the money wrung frae the
land by honest fouks among strangers and
foreigners?

“What ails the landlords that they wunna
live amang their ain people and oversee their
ain affairs, so that laird and farmer can mak
their bargain wi’ nae time-serving interloper
atween, an’ the puirest cottar on an estate hae
the richt tae see the man on whose lands he
lives, as did his fathers before him? ”

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.



January 18

CHRIST’S minister must, at the same time,
remember that he is the representative of
the Carpenter of Nazareth, Who had a very
tender compassion for the proletariat, and by
this Spirit has led them all those years through
the wilderness to the borders of the Promised
Land, and that he is the legitimate successor of
those Hebrew Prophets who were the cham-
pions of the poor and the uncompromising
enemies of tyrannical wealth.

The Cure of Souls.

January 19

ANY other man born at the beginning of the first century could be dropped into his class, but Jesus defied classification. As He moved among the synagogues of Galilee, He was an endless perplexity. One could never anticipate Him. One was in despair to explain Him. Whence is He? the people whispered with a vague sense of the problem, for He marked the introduction of a new form of life. He was not referable to type : He was the beginning of a time. *The Mind of the Master.*



January 20

HE was a head to every widow, and a father to the orphans, and the friend of all lowly, discouraged, unsuccessful souls. Ten miles away people did not know his name, but his own congregation regarded no other, and in the Lord's presence, it was well known, it was often mentioned ; when he laid down his trust, and arrived on the other side, many whom he had fed and guided, and restored and comforted, till he saw them through the gates, were waiting to receive their shepherd-minister, and as they stood around him before the Lord, he, of all men, could say without shame, "Behold, Lord, Thine under-shepherd, and the flock Thou didst give me." *The Cure of Souls.*

January 21

ONE may walk in the light and know nothing of astronomy, as did St. Thomas, who was practically a slave of Jesus and doctrinally a sceptic concerning Christ. One may have studied astronomy and walk in darkness, as did the Pharisees, who were accomplished in doctrine and sent Jesus to the Cross.

The Cure of Souls.



January 22

“FOR twa hundred years an’ mair there’s been a Baxter at Burnbrae and a Hay at Kilspindie ; ane wes juist a workin’ farmer, an’ the ither a belted earl, but gude freends an’ faithfu’ ; an’, ma Lord, Burnbrae wes as dear tae oor fouk as the castle wes tae yours.

“A’ mind that day the Viscount cam o’ age, an’ we gaithered tae wush him weel, that a’ saw the pictures o’ the auld Hays on yir walls, an’ thocht hoo mony were the ties that bund ye tae yir hame.

“We haena pictures nor gowden treasures, but there’s an’ auld chair at oor fireside, an’ a’ saw ma grandfather in it when a’ wes a laddie at the schule, an’ a’ mind him tellin’ me that his grandfather hed sat in it lang afore. It’s no’ worth muckle, an’ it’s been often mended, but a’ll no’ like tae see it carried oot frae Burnbrae.”

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.

January 23

WITH Jesus the present was ever eclipsed by the future, so that while the multitude would have made Him a King, He saw Himself forsaken on a cross; and while He was about to be crucified, He was promising to return for the judgment of the world. He set His face steadfastly, lifted above the ebb and flow of circumstances, because the Divine Will was ever revealing itself, peak above peak, to the ages of ages.

The Mind of the Master.



January 24

“IT’S a strange buik the Bible, and no the buik we wud hae made, tae judge by oor bit creeds and confessions. It’s like a head o’ aits in the harvest time. There’s the ear that hauds the grain and keeps it safe, and that’s the history, and there’s often no mickle nutriment in it; then there’s the corn lying in the ear, which is the Evangel frae Eden tae Revelation, and that is the bread o’ the soul. But the corn maun be threshed first and the cauf (chaff) cleaned aff. It’s a bonnie sicht tae see the pure grain fallin’ like a rinnin’ burn on the corn-room floor, and a glint o’ the sun through the window turning it intae gold. But the stour (dust) o’ the cauf room is mair than onybody can abide, and the cauf’s worth naethin’ when the corn’s awa.”

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.

January 25

CARMICHAEL'S predecessor was minister of the Free Church in those days, who afterwards got University preferment — he wrote a book on the Greek particles, much tasted in certain circles — and is still called “the Professor” in a hushed voice by old people. He was so learned a scholar that he would go out to visit without his hat, and so shy that he could walk to Kildrummie with one of his people on the strength of two observations, the first at Tochty bridge and the other at the crest of the hill above the station. Lachlan himself did not presume at times to understand his sermons, but the Free Church loved their scholar, for they knew the piety and courage that dwelt in the man.

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.



January 26

IT is not for him to stir up strife between classes, but to make peace, yet if in any critical conflict between the poor and the rich the minister of Jesus sides with the strongest, then hath he broken his commission and forsaken his Master. If the Church of the Nazarene lift not up her voice on behalf of those who “labour and are heavy laden,” and is not a refuge for the poor and friendless, what good is she on the face of the earth? *The Cure of Souls.*

January 27

THERE is nothing on which we differ so hopelessly as creed, nothing on which we agree so utterly as character. Inpanel twelve men of clean conscience and average intelligence and ask them to try some person by his opinions, and they may as well be discharged at once : they will not agree till the Greek Kalends. Ask them to take the standard of conduct, and they will bring in a verdict in five minutes.

The Mind of the Master.



January 28

HE is unfortunate whose thoughts are untouched by poetry and unfortified by ancient wisdom, over whose study the sky is ever grey and dull. An idea may be his, but his impression of it will be cold and colourless. On the other hand, he must have some reserve and self-denial on whose mind the sun beats strongly. It is possible to confuse and blot out an idea by excess of light, so that amid pictures, rivers, pyramids, sunsets, science, poetry, history, and drama, the hearer does not catch the one message that the preacher had for his soul. One blind after another has to be pulled down on certain brilliant and opulent minds before an idea, however grand and august, has its right place.

The Cure of Souls.

January 29

"**W**AE'S me, wha will care for her grave
when we're far awa an' no' a Baxter left in the Glen?" . . .

The past with the tender associations that make a woman's life was tightening its hold on Jean, and when they looked down on the Glen from the height of Burnbrae, her voice broke again,—

"It's a bonnie sicht, John, an' kindly tae
oor eyes; we'll never see anither tae sateesfy
oor auld age."

"A've seen nae ither a' ma days," said
Burnbrae, "an' there can be nane sae dear tae
me noo in this warld; but it can be boucht
ower dear, lass," and when she looked at him,
"wi' oor souls, Jean, wi' oor souls."

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.



January 30

SUPPOSE by the insistence of the Church it could be brought to pass—which is a vain expectation—that every man should, in any measurable period of time, be well fed and dressed and housed, should be free from disease, idleness, weariness, should have equal rights, privileges, opportunities with his neighbour, then this bread-and-butter paradise were a poor exchange for the Eternal Hope.

The Cure of Souls.

January 31

THE footpath from the doctor's to Whinnie Knowe passed along the front of the hill above the farm of Drumsheugh, and Marget came to the cottage where she had lived with her mother in the former time. It was empty, and she went into the kitchen. How home-like it had been in those days, and warm, even in winter, for Drumsheugh had made the wright board over the roof and put in new windows. Her mother was never weary speaking of his kindness, yet they were only working people. The snow had drifted down the wide chimney and lay in a heap on the hearth, and Marget shivered. The sorrow of life came upon her—the mother and the son now lying in the kirkyard. Then the blood rushed to her heart again, for love endures and triumphs. But sorrow without love . . . her thoughts returned to Drumsheugh, whose hearth-stone was cold indeed. She was now looking down on his home, set in the midst of the snow. Its cheerlessness appealed to her—the grey, sombre house where this man, with his wealth of love, lived alone.

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.

February

WITH the first plunge into the bed of the stream the water rose to the axles, and then it crept up to the shafts, so that the surgeon could feel it lapping in about his feet, while the dogcart began to quiver, and it seemed as if it were to be carried away. Sir George was as brave as most men, but he had never forded a Highland river in flood, and the mass of black water racing past beneath, before, behind him, affected his imagination and shook his nerves. He rose from his seat and ordered MacLure to turn back, declaring that he would be condemned utterly and eternally if he allowed himself to be drowned for any person.

“Sit doon,” thundered MacLure; “condemned ye will be suner or later gin ye shirk yir duty, but through the water ye gang the day.”

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.

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Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.

February 1

"**B**UT ye cudna ca' Burnbrae a shairp business man," said Jamie Soutar critically ; "he keepit Jess Stewart daein' naething for five year, and gared her believe she wes that usefu' he cudna want her, because Jess wud suner hae dee'd than gaen on the pairish.

"As for puir fouk, he wes clean redeeklus ; there wesna a weedow in the Glen didna get her seed frae him in a bad year. He hed abeelity in gaitherin', but he wes wastfu' in spendin'.

"Hooever, he 's gane noo, an' we maunna be sayin' ill o' the deed ; it 's no' what he wud hae dune himsel'. Whatna day 's the beerial ?" inquired Jamie anxiously.

"Beerial ? Losh preserve 's, Jamie," began Hillocks, but Drumsheugh understood.

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.



February 2

THE trend of the graver intelligence among the public is evident, and it is distinctly towards those great questions which form the substance of the Christian faith, and lie at the foundation of religion. People will lie becalmed in morals, and even in physical science, weary unto death, but if any one dares to deal with questions of faith after an understanding fashion, he has the wind with him.

The Cure of Souls.

February 3

WOMEN noticed that Carmichael bore himself to them as if each were a Madonna, and treated him in turn according to their nature. Some were abashed, and could not understand the lad's shyness ; those were saints. Some were amused, and suspected him of sarcasm ; those were less than saints. Some horrified him unto confusion of face because of the shameful things they said. One middle-aged female, whose conversation oscillated between physiology and rescue work, compelled Carmichael to sue for mercy on the ground that he had not been accustomed to speak about such details of life with a woman, and ever afterwards described him as a prude. It seemed to Carmichael that he was disliked by some women because he thought more highly of them than they thought of themselves.

Kate Carnegie.



February 4

AN audience creates an atmosphere which, after a little experience, one can feel with such accuracy that he knows when they are with him or against him. Audience and speaker act and react on one another, so that a supercilious and frigid people can chill the most fiery soul, while a hundred warm-hearted folk can make a plain man eloquent.

The Cure of Souls.

February 5

SABBATH or no Sabbath, the Glen cannot let him pass without some tribute of their pride.

Jess has recognised friends, and the doctor is drawing rein.

"It hes tae be dune," said Jamie, desperately, "say what ye like." Then they all looked towards him, and Jamie led.

"Hurrah," swinging his Sabbath hat in the air, "hurrah," and once more, "hurrah." . . . As they passed the corner of the kirk-yard, a figure waved his college cap over the wall and gave a cheer on his own account.

"God bless you, doctor, and well done."

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.



February 6

THHEY'VE heard about Saunders, a'm thinkin', wumman, and they're pleased we brocht him roond; he's fairly on the mend, ye ken, noo.

"A' never expeckit the like o' this, though, and it wes juist a wee thingie mair than a' cud hae stude.

"Ye hev yir share in't tae, lass; we've hed mony a hard nicht and day thegither, an' yon wes oor reward. No mony men in this world 'ill ever get a better, for it cam frae the hert o' honest fonk."

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.

February 7

JESUS reigns supreme among teachers not only by the perfection of His character but also by the grandeur of His subject. A prophet has many things to say to his generation ; one only is his message. Jesus treated every idea of the first order in the sphere of Religion ; His burden was Life. He did not set Himself to teach men how to organise the state, nor how to analyse their minds, nor how to discharge elementary duties, nor how to form a science of Theology. This was not because Jesus despised these departments, it was because He proposed to dominate them. He would not localise Himself in one because He would inspire all. Behind the state is the individual, behind the individual is the soul, and the one question of the soul is life.

The Mind of the Master.



February 8

THERE are minds so comprehensive and agile that they can play with half a dozen ideas in one sermon and delight an audience — making one idea illuminate another, and using the combined force of opposite ideas to produce the desired effect ; but for the average man with whom we are concerned the handling of one is a sufficient strain.

The Cure of Souls.

February 9

THE young minister was stirred on the way to Kilbogie, and began to dream dreams in the twilight. Love had come suddenly to him, and after an unexpected fashion. Miss Carnegie was of another rank and another faith, nor was she even his ideal woman, neither conspicuously spiritual nor gentle, but frank, outspoken, fearless, self-willed. He could also see that she had been spoiled by her father and his friends, who had given her *carte blanche* to say and do what she pleased. Very likely — he could admit that even in the first blush of his emotion — she might be passionate and prejudiced on occasion, even a fierce hater.

Kate Carnegie.



February 10

S T. THERESA had been the woman enshrined in the tabernacle of his heart, but life might have been a trifle tiresome if a man were married to a saint. The saints have no humour, and do not relax. Life with a woman like Miss Carnegie would be effervescent and stimulating, full of surprises and piquancy. No, she was not a saint, but he felt by an instinct she was pure, loyal, reverent, and true at the core. She was a gallant lass, and . . . he loved her.

Kate Carnegie.

February 11

"IT'S no' Milton's preachin' Drumtochty disna like, but his leein', an' that Drumtochty canna abide. Nae man," summed up Drumsheugh, "hes ony richt tae speak aboot releegion ye canna trust in the market."

So it came to pass that Milton counted Drumtochty as an outcast place, because they did not speak about the affairs of the life to come, and Drumtochty would have nothing to do with Milton, because he was not straight in the affairs of the life which now is. *The Days of Auld Lang Syne.*



February 12

D^{RUMTOCHTY} was amazed at her self-will, and declared by the mouth of Kirsty Stewart that Carmichael's aunt had flown in the face of Providence. Below her gentle simplicity she was, however, a shrewd woman, and was quite determined that her nephew should not be handed over to the tender mercies of a clerical housekeeper, who is said to be a heavier yoke than the Confession of Faith, for there be clever ways of escape from confessions, but none from Margaret Meiklewham ; and while all the churches are busy every year in explaining that their Articles do not mean what they say, Miss Meiklewham had a snort which was beyond all she said, and that was not by any means restricted.

Kate Carnegie.

February 13

A RT, with an unerring instinct of moral beauty, has seized the Cross and idealised it. It is wrought in gold and hung from the neck of light-hearted beauty ; it is stamped on the costly binding of Bibles that go to church in carriages ; it stands out in bold relief on churches that are filled with easy-going people. Painters have given themselves to crucifixions, and their striking works are criticised by persons who praise the thorns in the crown, but are not quite pleased with the expression on Jesus' face, and then return to their pleasures. Composers have cast the bitter Passion of Jesus into stately oratorios, and fashionable audiences are affected unto tears.

The Mind of the Master.



February 14

WHAT we want to-day is not organisers, but preachers ; and every hindrance ought to be removed, that a man who can preach may have an opportunity of fulfilling his high calling. One Minister laboured for three years night and day, and when His ministry was suddenly closed He had only a roomful of people. But one man was St. John and one woman was St. Mary Magdalene. A single Raphael counts more than hundreds of clever impressionist sketches. One saintly soul reared by a patient ministry will weigh down in the scales mobs of hearers.

The Cure of Souls.

February 15

THEY are unworthy of their profession who join in the Philistine outcry against theology, and allow it to be spoken of as something not worthy of serious study. If it be praiseworthy to classify beetles, and specialists among the coleoptera speak solemnly of their subject, it may be allowed for one science to reason regarding God and the soul. *The Cure of Souls.*



February 16

HIS coat he flung east and his waistcoat west, as far as he could hurl them, and it was plain he would have shouted had he been a complete mile from Saunders' room. Any less distance was useless for adequate expression. He struck Drumsheugh a mighty blow that well-nigh levelled that substantial man in the dust, and then the doctor of Drumtochty issued his bulletin.

“Saunders wesna tae live through the nicht, but he’s livin’ this meenut, an’ like to live.

“He’s got by the warst clean and fair, and wi’ him that’s as good as cure.

“It’ll be a graund waukenin’ for Bell; she’ll no be a widow yet, nor the bairnies fatherless.

“There’s nae use glowerin’ at me, Drumsheugh, for a body’s daft at a time, an’ a’ canna contain masel, and a’ m no gaein’ tae try.”

Then it dawned upon Drumsheugh that the doctor was attempting the Highland fling.

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.

February 17

SPIRITUAL Life is not a series of isolated springs, but an ocean laving every shore. It is one, and has its source in God ; as Truth and Righteousness and Love are one, and stand in God. When one thinks of Life in man as one thing, and Life in God as another, he has lost the key to the science of Life. Nothing deserves the name of Life in us that cannot be affirmed of God. Life in the soul is the tide of the Divine ocean flowing as it has opportunity through the narrow channels of human nature. Everything else is only a colourable imitation of Life, and a mode of existence. Life is in its origin Heavenly, and cometh down.

The Mind of the Master.



February 18

THIS is the final test of all societies in the machinery of the congregation — do they help or weaken the Church ? Are they branches springing out of the trunk and gathering into their leaves the air and light of heaven — a beauty and strength ? Then let them be fostered. Or are they suckers drawing away so much of the sap from the tree itself ? a luxuriant, unprofitable, mutinous undergrowth — then let them be cut down and done away with, for they are in any case only human inventions, but the Church is of Christ and the home of the soul.

The Cure of Souls.

February 19

"IT iss in the dark that Flora will be coming, and she must know that her father iss waiting for her."

He cleaned and trimmed with anxious hand a lamp that was kept for show, and had never been used. Then he selected from his books Edwards' "Sinners in the Hands of an angry God," and "Coles on the Divine Sovereignty," and on them he laid the large family Bible out of which Flora's name had been blotted. This was the stand on which he set the lamp in the window, and every night till Flora returned its light shone down the steep path that ascended to her home, like the Divine Love from the open door of our Father's House.

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.



February 20

JESUS laid Himself alongside sinful people, and out of them He slowly built up the new kingdom. If a man was a formalist, he must be born again ; if the slave of riches, he must sell all he had ; if in the toils of a darling sin, he must pluck out his right eye to enter the kingdom of God. New men to make a new state. The kingdom was humility, purity, generosity, unselfishness. It was the reign of character ; it was the struggle for perfection.

The Mind of the Master.

February 21

BURNBRAE and Jean saw all their gear, save the household furniture, set out for sale. She had resolved to be brave for his sake, but every object in the field made its own appeal to her heart. What one read in the auctioneer's catalogue was a bare list of animals and implements, the scanty plenishing of a Highland farm. Jean saw everything in a golden mist of love. It was a perfectly preposterous old dog-cart, that ought to have been broken up long ago, but how often she had gone in it to Muirtown on market days with John ! and on the last journey he had wrapped her up as tenderly as when she was a young bride.

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.



February 22

WHEN tides meet there is broken water, and many are tossed in their minds as to whether the pulpit ought to give its strength to the regeneration of the individual or of society. Certainly it were a departure from the method of our Lord to ignore the soul, with its awful responsibilities and immense possibilities, to starve the inner life, which is the spring of all good thinking and working, to be silent regarding the things unseen and eternal.

The Cure of Souls.

February 23

WHILE piety imagined God as the Father of a few and the Judge of the rest, humanity was belittled and Pharisaism reigned ; slavery was defended from the Bible, and missions were counted an impertinence. When He is recognised as the universal Father, and the outcasts of Humanity as His prodigal children, every effort of love will be stimulated, and the Kingdom of God will advance by leaps and bounds. As this sublime truth is believed, national animosities, social divisions, religious hatreds and inhuman doctrines will disappear. No class will regard itself as favoured : no class will feel itself rejected, for all men everywhere will be embraced in the mission of Jesus and the love of the Father.

The Mind of the Master.



February 24

"MASTER Gordon," said Marget, "this is George's Homer, and he bade me tell you that he coonted yir freendship ain o' the gifts o' God." For a brief space Gordon was silent, and, when he spoke, his voice sounded strange in that room.

"Your son was the finest scholar of my time, and a very perfect gentleman. He was also my true friend, and I pray God to console his mother." And Ludovic Gordon bowed low over Marget's worn hand as if she had been a queen.

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.

February 25

IT lies upon the minister of Christ to care for the souls of his people from house to house ; to spare no pains that divine service be beautiful and reverent ; to afford to the young every useful means of religious culture ; to move his congregation unto such good works as lie to their hand : but it is well for him to remember that the most critical and influential event in the religious week is the sermon. History bears unanimous testimony on this point.

The Cure of Souls.



February 26

IT is a person, not a dogma, which invites my faith ; a person, not a code, which asks for obedience. Jesus stands in the way of every selfishness ; He leads in the path of every sacrifice ; He is crucified in every act of sin ; He is glorified in every act of holiness. St. Stephen, as he suffered for the Gospel, saw the heavens open and Jesus standing to receive him. St. Peter, fleeing in a second panic from Rome, meets Jesus returning to be crucified in his place. Conscience and heart are settled on Jesus, and one feels within his soul the tides of His virtue. It is not the doctrines nor the ethics of Christianity that are its irresistible attraction. Its doctrines have often been a stumbling-block, and its ethics excel only in degree. The life-blood of Christianity is Christ.

The Mind of the Master.

February 27

CERTAIN preachers enrich their sermons with quotations, and a stately line has often fitly crowned an argument. But this habit calls for delicacy and reticence. When a sentence of some loved writer occurs to one as he is thinking out his discourse, and he uses it as the expression of his own mind, then it becomes a part of the pattern, and is more than justified. When he stops at intervals, and goes in search of such passages, the quotation is then foreign to his thinking, it is a tag of embroidery stitched on the garment.

The Cure of Souls.



February 28

WHEN one says, "Lord, I believe," in Jesus' sense, he means that he trusts — a very different thing. Jesus' physical Resurrection, in the same way, is a question that can only be decided by evidence, and is within the province of reason. His spiritual Resurrection is a drama of the soul, and a matter of faith. When I declare my belief that on the third day Jesus rose, I am really yielding to evidence. When I am crucified with Christ, buried with Christ, and rise to newness of life in Christ, I am believing after the very sense of Jesus.

The Mind of the Master.

February 29

“YE ken verra weel” — for Milton believed Jamie a kindred spirit at this stage — “that we’re a’ here on probation, and that few are chosen — juist a handfu’ here an’ there ; no’ on accoont o’ ony excellence in oorsel’s, so we maunna boast.”

“Verra comfortin’ for the handfu’,” murmured Jamie, his eyes fixed on the roof.

“Weel, gin yon young man didna declare in sae mony words that we were a’ God’s bairns, an’ that He wes gaein’ tae dae the best He cud wi’ every ane o’ s. What think ye o’ that ? — nae difference atween the elect an’ the ither, nae preeveleges nor advantages ! It’s against baith Scriptur an’ reason.”

“He wes maybe mixin’ up the Almichty wi’ his ain faither,” suggested Jamie. “A’ve heard ignorant fouk say that a’ the differ is that the Almichty is nae waur than oor ain faither, but oot o’ a’ sicht kinder. But whar wud ye be gin ye alloooed the like o’ that ? — half o’ the doctrines wud hae tae be reformed,” and Jamie departed, full of condolence with Milton.

It was not wonderful after these trying experiences that Milton became a separatist, and edified himself and his household in his kitchen.

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.

March

"HE'S a skilly man, Doctor MacLure," continued my friend Mrs. Macfadyen, whose judgment on sermons or anything else was seldom at fault ; "an' a kind-hearted, though o' coarse he hes his faults like us a', an' he disna tribble the Kirk often.

"He aye can tell what's wrang wi' a body, an' maistly he can put ye richt, an' there's nae newfangled wys wi' him : a blister for the outside an' Epsom salts for the inside dis his wark, an' they say there's no an herb on the hills he disna ken.

"If we're tae dee, we're tae dee ; an' if we're tae live, we're tae live," concluded Elspeth, with sound Calvinistic logic ; "but a'll say this for the doctor, that whether yir tae live or dee, he can aye keep up a shairp meisture on the skin."

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.

March 1

AS we grow older and see more of life, it seems easier to put a man out of conceit with his sin by showing him the winsome and perfect form of goodness. So full of surprises is human nature that he will loathe himself and be drawn to the preacher, and, best of all, love righteousness. He that scolds in the pulpit, or rails, only irritates ; he that appreciates and persuades wins the day.

The Cure of Souls.



March 2

NOT only has the best theology been fed by this spirit (so that Bonaventura, questioned regarding his learning, pointed to the crucifix), and the living hymnology been its incarnation (so that to remove the name of Jesus were to leave no fragrance) ; but all the vast and varied philanthropy of public Christianity and the sweet and winsome graces of private life have been the fruit of this unworldly emotion. “For my sake” has opened a new spring of conduct, from which has flowed the heroism and saintliness of nineteen centuries. When Jesus founded His religion on personal attachment, it seemed a fond imagination : the perennial vitality of Christianity has been His vindication.

The Mind of the Master.

March 3

"**I**T'S a shairp trial, wife, an' hard tae bear.
But dinna forget oor mercies. We hae
oor fower laddies left us, an' a' daein' weel.

"We ought tae be thankfu' that Sandie's
been kept in the battle. Think o' yir son win-
nin' the Victoria Cross, wumman, an' ye'll see
it on his breist.

"An' oor lassie's safe, Jean . . . in the Auld
Hame, an' . . . we'll sune be gaein' oorsel's
an' . . . the'll be nae pairtin' there.

"Ye hae me, Jean, an' a' hae ma ain gude-
wife, an' love is mair than a' the things a man
can see wi' his een or haud in his hands. Sae
dinna be cast doon, lass, for nae hand can touch
oor treasures or tak awa oor love."

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.



March 4

IT is right to say that the Church must labour
to bring heaven here, but this heaven is long
of coming, and meanwhile the Church must
comfort the oppressed, the suffering, the beaten
in this present battle, with the vision of the City
of Rest, where is no more pain, neither crying,
for the former things have passed away. A
policy of sanitation is excellent, but it cannot
replace the Way of Salvation.

The Cure of Souls.

March 5

A N extremely clever woman disappeared into Asia and returned with another religion, which has distinctly added to the innocent gaiety of the English nation. One never knows when a new religion may not be advertised. Various interesting societies are understood to be working at something, and each novelty receives a good-natured welcome. No person with any sense of humour resents one of these efforts to stimulate the jaded palate of society, unless it be paraded a season too long and threatens to become a bore. Criticism would be absurd : you might as well analyse *Alice in Wonderland*. Comparison with Christianity is impossible : it were an insult to Jesus. *The Mind of the Master.*



March 6

"A' GAED up tae the Manse last nicht, and telt the minister hoo the doctor focht aucht oors for Saunders' life, an' won, and ye never saw a man sae carried. He walkit up and doon the room a' the time, and every other meenut he blew his nose like a trumpet.

" 'I've a cold in my head to-night, Drum-sheugh,' says he ; 'never mind me.' "

" A' ve hed the same masel in sic circumstances ; they come on sudden," said Jamie.

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.

March 7

WE are now in the school of St. John, and are beginning to discover that none can be a heretic who loves, nor any one be other than a schismatic who does not love. None can be cast out of God's kingdom if he loves, none received into it if he does not love. Usher cannot excommunicate Rutherford because he was not ordained by a Bishop, nor Rutherford condemn Usher because he was a head and front of Prelacy. Channing cannot exclude Faber because he believes too much, or Faber exclude Channing because he believes too little. None can read Jesus' exposition of Love and imagine such moral disorder.

The Mind of the Master.



March 8

SCIENCE has, for its field, everything material; religion, everything spiritual. When the scientist comes, as he constantly does, on something beyond his tests, as, for instance, life, he ought to leave it to Religion. When the saint comes on something material, as, for instance, creation, he ought to leave it to Science. Faith has no apparatus for science; science has no method of discovering God. For the phenomena of the universe we look to Science; for the facts of the soul to Faith.

The Mind of the Master.

March 9

CONCEIVE it that a man should receive infants in the name of Christ, should dispense the Sacrament of the Lord's death, should minister by the bedside of the dying, should be witness of the supreme conflicts of the soul, should carry the message of the Divine Love, should intercede for the people with God, should live and work amid sacred mysteries,—and should have lost all sense of their awfulness, their loveliness, their tenderness.

The Cure of Souls.



March 10

IT must be remembered that when Jesus had said His last word on earth and ascended unto the Father, it was not to cease from teaching any more than from working. He was only to depart in the flesh, having given the letter, that He might return by the Holy Ghost to open up the spirit. Like a father He placed in the hands of His children the sum of all His wisdom, not expecting them at once to understand it, but charging them to study it, in the good hope that one day they would enter into its fulness. The Church has been the child, and the long history of doctrine and morals has been the attempt to possess Jesus' words, while all the time He Himself was the Saviour of every one that trusted in Him.

The Mind of the Master.

March 11

HOLINESS compels awe, wisdom compels respect ; they do not allure. Nothing can create Life but Life ; nothing can beget Love but Love. He that is not loved hates ; he that is loved, loves, is a law of experience. As the earth gives out the heat which it has received from the sun, so the devotion of Jesus' disciples to Him in all ages has been the return of His immense devotion to them. He lavished on His first disciples a wealth of love in His friendship ; He sealed it with His sacrifice of Himself upon the cross.

The Mind of the Master.



March 12

HIS people are ever in the pastor's heart, although this may not appear in his ordinary manner. He claims identity with them in their joy and sorrow and endless vicissitudes of life. No friend is blessed with any good gift of God but he is also richer. No household suffers loss but he is poorer. If one stand amid great temptation he is stronger ; if one fall he is weaker. When any one shows conspicuous grace the pastor thanks God as for himself ; when any one refuses His call he is dismayed, counting himself less faithful.

The Cure of Souls.

March 13

NO power in human experience has wrought such mighty works as the spoken word : it has beaten down impiety, taught righteousness, given freedom to the oppressed, and created nations. Before Knox, armed with this sword of God, hosts fled, and he reigned in the pulpit of St. Giles as a king upon his throne : and if you go into the roots of things, was not the American nation founded on brave, wholesome speech ?

The Cure of Souls.



March 14

WHEN the sashes are flying away from the windows and the skirting boards from the floor, and the planks below your feet are a finger-breadth apart, and the pipes are death-traps, it does not matter that the walls are covered by art papers and plastered over with china dishes. This erection, wherein human beings have to live and work and fight their sins and prepare for eternity, is a fraud and a lie. No man compelled to exist in such an environment of unreality can respect himself or other people ; and if it come to pass that he holds cheap views of life, and reads smart papers, and does sharp things in business, and that his talk be only a clever jingle, then a plea in extenuation will be lodged for him at the Great Assize.

Kate Carnegie.

March 15

WHEN Jesus came from the Father, the religious instincts were withering in the dust, and vainly feeling for something on which they could climb to God ; Jesus presented Himself, and gathered the tendrils of the soul round His Person. He found religion a rite ; He left it a passion.

The Mind of the Master.



March 16

THE final test of any religion is its inherent spiritual dynamic : the force of Christianity is the pledge of its success. It is not a school of morals, nor a system of speculation, it is an enthusiasm. This religion is Spring in the spiritual world, with the irresistible charm of the quickening wind and the bursting bud. It is a birth, as Jesus would say, a breath of God that makes all things new. Humanity does not need morals, it needs motives : it is sick of speculation, it longs for action. Men see their duty in every land and age with exasperating clearness. We know not how to do it. No one condemns the good, he leaves it undone. No one approves the evil, he simply does it. Our moral machinery is complete but motionless. The religion which inspires men with a genuine passion for holiness and a constraining motive of service will last. It has solved the problem of spiritual motion.

The Mind of the Master.

March 17

WE must accept the age into which Providence has cast us, and enter into its spirit. One can hardly imagine any more honourable task than to meet its wants and to guide its inquiries. There are ages which have been saved from sin by evangelism ; this is an age which must be saved from scepticism by knowledge.

The Cure of Souls.



March 18

EVERY Sabbath a company of the Auld Kirk going west met a company of the Frees going east, and nothing passed except a nod or “A wee saft,” in the case of drenching rain, not through any want of neighbourliness, but because this was the nature God had been pleased to give Drumtochty.

For the first time, the Auld Kirk insisted on a halt and conversation. It did not sound much, being mainly a comparison of crops among the men, and a brief review of the butter market by the women — Jamie Soutar only going the length of saying that he was coming next Sabbath to hear the last of Cunningham’s “course” — but it was understood to be a demonstration, and had its due effect.

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.

March 19

WHEN the Roman Empire was laid waste, and the world seemed to be falling to pieces, St. Augustine described the new empire that should rise on the ashes of the old. The *City of God* stands first among his writings, and created the Holy Roman Empire, but the Papacy has not redeemed humanity. When the life of Florence was eaten out by the Medicis, Savonarola purified the city for a space with a thunder-storm. The Florentines cast out their Herods at the bidding of their Baptist, they burned their vanities in the market-place, they elected Jesus King of Florence by acclamation. In a little they brought Herod back, and burned the Baptist in the same market-place.

The Mind of the Master.



March 20

THE Puritans were at first quiet, serious, peaceable men who were outraged by the reign of unrighteousness, and drew the sword to deliver England. They made the host of God triumphant for a little. Then came the reaction, and iniquity covered the land as with a flood. It was high failure, but it was failure. It does not become us to criticise those forlorn hopes; we ought to learn from their reverses.

The Mind of the Master.

March 21

THE preacher has admiration for his peculiar reward, but the pastor has affection : if the preacher be ill there are paragraphs in the newspapers ; if the pastor, there is concern in humble homes. No man in human society gathers such a harvest of kindly feeling as the shepherd of souls, none is held in such grateful memory.

The Cure of Souls.



March 22

WHEN at last the doctor rose to go, in spite of Jean's last remonstrance that he had eaten nothing, Burnbrae said he would like the ministers to take the reading that night, and then they all went into the kitchen, which had been made ready. A long table stood in the centre, and at one end lay the old family Bible ; round the table gathered Burnbrae's sons and the serving lads and women. Doctor Davidson motioned to the Free Church minister to take his place at the head.

"This is your family, and your elder's house."

But Cunningham spoke out instantly with a clear voice —

"Doctor Davidson, there is neither Established nor Free Church here this night ; we are all one in faith and love, and you were ordained before I was born." *The Days of Auld Lang Syne.*

March 23

THE Sermon on the Mount is the measure of Jesus' optimism, and its gradual fulfilment His justification. His ideas have matured in the human consciousness, and are now bursting into flower before our eyes. Thoughtful men of many schools are giving their mind to the programme of Jesus, and asking whether it ought not to be attempted. The ideal of Life, one dares now to hope, is to be realised within measurable distance, and the dreams of the Galilean Prophet become history.

The Mind of the Master.



March 24

MY thoughts drift to the auld schule-house and Domsie. Some one with the love of God in his heart had built it long ago, and chose a site for the bairns in the sweet pine-woods at the foot of the cart road to Whinnie Knowe and the upland farms. It stood in a clearing with the tall Scotch firs round three sides, and on the fourth a brake of gorse and bramble bushes, through which there was an opening to the road. The clearing was the playground, and in summer the bairns annexed as much wood as they liked, playing tig among the trees, or sitting down at dinner-time on the soft, dry spines that made an elastic carpet everywhere.

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.

March 25

THE preacher also addresses a jury of say five hundred people, and whether his subject be sin or righteousness, doctrine or duty, he has to bring them to his way of thinking, and persuade them to believe his message. If he talks above their heads, or delivers himself of dead information, or airs his own conceits, or raises vain questions, or bores them with obsolete doctrines, then he misses his chance, and in spite of his learning or acuteness or piety he is a failure.

The Cure of Souls.



March 26

SO we imagined an outer court of the religious life where most of us made our home, and a secret place where only God's nearest friends could enter, and it was said of Burnbrae, "He 's far ben." His neighbours had watched him, for a generation and more, buying and selling, ploughing and reaping, going out and in the common ways of a farmer's life, and had not missed the glory of the soul. The cynic of Drumtochty summed up his character: "There 's a puckle gude fouk in the pairish, and ane or twa o' the ither kind, and the maist o' us are half and between," said Jamie Soutar, "but there 's ae thing ye may be sure o', Burnbrae is 'far ben.'"

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.

March 27

“THIS letter 'ill gie ye a sair hert for mony a day, but ye 'll coont the sairness a blessing an' no' an ill. Never lat it slip frae yir mind that twa true weemen loved ye an' prayed for ye till the laist, deein' wi' yir name on their lips. Ye 'll be a man yet, Chairlie.

“Dinna answer this letter — answer yon fond herts that love an' pray for ye. Gin ye be ever in tribble, lat me ken. A' wes yir grandmither's freend and Lily's freend; sae lang as a' m here, coont me yir freend for their sake.

“JAMES SOUTAR.”

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.



March 28

KATE was a lovable lass, but, like every complete woman, she had a temper and a stock of prejudices. She was good comrade with all true men, although her heart was whole, and with a few women that did not mince their words or carry two faces; but Kate had claws inside the velvet, and once she so handled with her tongue a young fellow who offended her that he sent in his papers. What she said was not much, but it was memorable, and every word drew blood. Her father was never quite certain what she would do, although he was always sure of her love.

Kate Carnegie.

March 29

WHAT rends society in every land is the conflict between the rights of the one and the rights of the many, and harmony can only be established by their reconciliation. Peace can never be made by the suppression of the individual — which is collectivism, nor by the endless sacrifice of a hundred for the profit of one — which is individualism. Jesus came to bring each man's individuality to perfection, not to sink him in the mass. Jesus came to rescue the poor and weak from the tyranny of power and ambition, not to leave them in bondage. Both ends were His, and both are embraced in His new commandment. For the ideal placed before each individual is not rule but service, and in proportion to his attainments will be his sacrifices.

The Mind of the Master.



March 30

UNFORTUNATELY for us, at the close of the nineteenth century, with its competition, sensationalism, externalism, and endless bustle, meditation is a lost art, like the making of Venetian glass and certain painters' pigments. It is not reading, nor thinking, nor praying; it is brooding, a spiritual experience, where the subject is hidden in the soul as leaven in three measures of meal till all be leavened.

The Cure of Souls.

March 31

"**Y**E maunna be cast doon, Jean," and his voice was very tender, "an' a' ken weel ye'll no be angry wi' me."

"Angry?" said Jean; "ma hert failed last nicht for a whilie, but that's ower noo an' for ever. John, a' lovit ye frae the time we sat in the schule thegither, an' a' wes a happy wumman when ye mairried me.

"A've been lifted mony a time when a' saw hoo fouk respeckit ye, and abune a' when ye gaed doon the kirk wi' the cups in yir hands at the Saicrament, for a' kent ye were worthy.

"Ye're dearer tae me ilka year that comes and gaes, but a' never lovit ye as a' dae this nicht, an' a' coont sic a husband better than onything God cud gie me on earth."

And then Jean did what was a strange thing in Drumtochty—she flung her arms round Burnbrae's neck and kissed him.

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.

April

IT was a fine April morning when the news of the great disaster came, and the Doctor felt the stirring of spring in his blood. On the first hint from Skye he sprang from his chair, declaring it was a sin to be in the house on such a day, and went out in such haste that he had to return for his hat. As he went up the walk, the Doctor plucked some early lilies and placed them in his coat ; he threw so many stones that Skye forgot his habit of body and ecclesiastical position ; and he was altogether so youthful and frolicsome that John was seriously alarmed, and afterwards remarked to Rebecca that he was not unprepared for calamity.

"The best o 's tempts Providence at a time, and when a man like the Doctor tries tae rin aifter his dog jidgment canna be far off. A 'm no sayin'," John concluded with characteristic modesty, "that onyboddy cud tell what was coming, but a' jaloused there wud be tribble."

Kate Carnegie.

April 1

“THEY were gude men ‘at githered ablow
the beech-tree in the kirkyaird on a Sab-
bath mornin’,” he said aloud, and the new ac-
cent had now lost itself altogether in an older
tongue; “and there wesna a truer hert amang
them a’ than Jamie. Gin he hed been spared
tae gie me a shak o’ his hand, a’ wud hae been
comforted; an’ aifter him a’ wud like a word
frae Drumsheugh. A’ wunner gin he be still
tae the fore.”

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.



April 2

SENSIBLE and book-reading men do not
hunger for six courses, but they are criti-
cal about their toast and . . . nothing more,
for that is the pulse. Then a man also hates
to have any fixed hour for breakfast — never
thinking without a shudder of houses where they
have prayers at 7.50 — but a man refuses to
be kept waiting five minutes for dinner. If a
woman will find his belongings, which he has
scattered over three rooms and the hall, he in-
vests her with many virtues; and if she packs
his portmanteau, he will associate her with St.
Theresa. But if his hostess be inclined to dis-
cuss problems with him, he will receive her
name with marked coldness; and if she follow
up this trial with evil food, he will conceive a
rooted dislike for her, and will flee her house.
So simple is a man.

Kate Carnegie.

April 3

JESUS expected that His love would have a wider range than the fellowship of Galilee, and that the world would yield to its spell. It was not for St. John, His friend, Jesus laid down His life; it was for the Race into which He had been born and which He carried in His heart. No one has ever made such a sacrifice for Humanity. No one has dared to ask such a recompense. The eternal Son of God gave Himself without reserve, and anticipated that to all time men would give themselves for Him. He proposed to inspire His Race with a personal devotion, and that profound devotion was to be their salvation. "Give me a cross whereon to die," said Jesus, "and I will make thereof a throne from which to rule the world."

The Mind of the Master.



April 4

THE preacher, to succeed, must be Peter as he denies his Lord, and Mary as her brother dies, and the Syrian woman as she sees Christ yield to her irresistible importunity. This baptism into the heart of a subject, till the preacher and sermon be of one blood, is a secret process that can go on as the minister does his work, but is much accelerated on his quiet walks and in his lonely hours.

The Cure of Souls.

April 5

WHEN the Church of Christ receives a reinforcement of common sense, and manages her affairs with as much shrewdness as a bank, one is certain that her rulers will make some salutary reforms. Incapable men will be removed without hesitation, on the sound principle that the ministry exists for the Church, and not the Church for the ministry. The man and his work will also be harmonised.

The Cure of Souls.



April 6

WHEN a biographer of Jesus, more distinguished perhaps by his laborious detail than his insight into truth, seriously recommends Jesus to the notice of the world by certificates from Rousseau and Napoleon, or when some light-hearted man of letters embroiders a needy paragraph with a string of names where Jesus is wedged in between Zoroaster and Goethe, the Christian consciousness is aghast. This treatment is not merely bad taste; it is impossible by any canon of thought; it is as if one should compare the sun with electric light, or the colour of Titian with the bloom of the rose. We criticise every other teacher; we have an intuition of Jesus. He is not a subject of study, He is a revelation to the soul — that or nothing.

The Mind of the Master.

April 7

OUR kirkyard was on a height facing the south, with the massy Tochty woods on one side and the manse on the other, while down below—a meadow between—the river ran, so that its sound could just be heard in clear weather. From its vantage one could see the Ochils as well as one of the Lomonds, and was only cut off from the Sidlaws by Tochty woods. It was not well kept, after the town's fashion, having no walk, save the broad track to the kirk door and a narrower one to the manse garden; no cypresses or weeping willows or beds of flowers—only four or five big trees had flung their kindly shadow for generations over the place where the fathers of the Glen took their long rest.

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.



April 8

THIS is not an intellectual proposition to be asserted and proved, or a fancy to be tracked out and exhibited. This is a spiritual truth to be commended to faith, a living principle to be enforced on conscience. It must, therefore, be first imprinted on the preacher's soul till it has become a part of his own being, before he can really understand or declare it.

The Cure of Souls.

April 9

WHEN Jesus rose from the dead He found that one of His apostles had not kept Easter Day, and would not accept His Resurrection unless Jesus afforded him physical proof of the most humble and elementary kind. Jesus conceded to Love what could not be given to faith, and St. Thomas, who had lost faith in Jesus' humanity, rose to the faith of His divinity. But Jesus reproached him, and rated his faith at a low value. It was only a bastard faith that had not freed itself of sight.

"What," said St. Augustine, "is Faith, but to believe what you do not see?" It was a happy epitome of the teaching of Jesus. With Jesus Faith is the opposite of sight.

The Mind of the Master.



April 10

ONE comes upon a person that has not one point of contact with the thought-world: he eats, digests, moves, — we say he exists. One comes on another full of ideas, plans, dreams, ambitions, — we say he is alive. It is the approximate statement of a fact in human history. When the former dies we are not astonished, because it had never struck us that he was alive. When the latter dies we are shocked, the disappearance of that radiant man is a catastrophe.

The Mind of the Master.

April 11

HERE and there the minister would stop as a trout leapt in a pool, or a flock of wild duck crossed the sky to Loch Sheuchie, or the cattle thrust inquisitive noses through some hedge, as a student snatches a mouthful from some book in passing. For these walks were his best study; when thinking of his people in their goodness and simplicity, and touched by nature at her gentlest, he was freed from many vain ideas of the schools and from artificial learning, and heard the Galilean speak as He used to do among the fields of corn.

Kate Carnegie.



April 12

IT was natural that the imagination of Jesus should inspire heroic souls in every age; it was perhaps inevitable that few could enter into His mind. Nothing has given such a moral impetus to human society; nothing has conferred such nobility of character as the Kingdom of God; nothing has been so sadly misunderstood. The sublime self-restraint of Jesus, His inexhaustible patience, His immovable charity, His unerring insight, did not descend to certain of His disciples. They longed to anticipate the victory of righteousness, and burned to cleanse the world by force. Such eager souls gained for themselves an imperishable name, but they failed.

The Mind of the Master.

April 13

PUBLIC worship ought to be comforting, joyful, enthusiastic, beautiful, the flower of all the week, but its chief note should be reverence and godly fear. Praise and prayer, the reading of Holy Scripture, and the preaching of the Evangel, should conspire to lift the congregation above the present world and the sensible atmosphere in which they have been living, and bring them face to face with the Eternal.

The Cure of Souls.



April 14

“‘A’ prayed last nicht that the Lord wud leave Saunders till the laddies cud dae for themselves, an’ thae words came intae ma mind, “Weeping may endure for a nicht, but joy cometh in the mornin’.”

“‘The Lord heard ma prayer, and joy hes come in the mornin’,’ an’ she gripped the doctor’s hand.

“‘Ye’ve been the instrument, Doctor MacLure. Ye wudna gie him up, and ye did what nae ither cud for him, an’ a’ ve ma man the day, and the bairns hae their father.’

“An’ afore MacLure kent what she was daein’, Bell lifted his hand to her lips an’ kissed it.”

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.

April 15

JESUS crystallised the idea of Faith which is held in solution throughout the Bible, and rests on the assumption of two worlds. There is the physical world which lies round us on every side, and of which our bodies are a part. This is one environment, and the instrument of knowledge here is sight. There is the spiritual world which is hidden by the veil of the physical, and of which our souls are a part. This is another environment, and the instrument of knowledge here is faith. *The Mind of the Master.*



April 16

JESUS was not an agreeable sentimentalist who imagined that He could cleanse the world by rose-water; He was the only thinker who grasped the whole situation root and branch. He did not propose to make sin illegal; that had been done without conspicuous benefit. He proposed to make sin impossible by replacing it with love. If sin be an act of self-will, each person making himself the centre, then Love is the destruction of sin, because Love connects instead of isolating. No one can be envious, avaricious, hard-hearted; no one can be gross, sensual, unclean, if he loves. Love is the death of all bitter and unholy moods of the soul, because Love lifts the man out of himself and teaches him to live in another.

The Mind of the Master.

April 17

No one can exaggerate the opportunity given to a preacher when, on the morning of the first day of the week, he ascends the pulpit and faces a congregation who are gathered in the name of Jesus, and wait to hear what he has to say to them concerning the things which are unseen and eternal. Each man carries his own burden of unbelief, sorrow, temptation, care, into the House of God, and the preacher has to hearten all; for, indeed, the work of the pulpit in our day is not so much to teach or define as to stimulate and encourage. *The Cure of Souls.*



April 18

"YOU'RE not away yet, Burnbrae, you're not away yet; it's not so easy to turn out a Drumtochty man as our English factor thought: we're a stiff folk, and our roots grip fast.

"He was to rule this parish, and he was to do as he pleased with honest men; we'll see who comes off best before the day is done," and the doctor struck his stick, the stick of office with the golden head, on the gravel in triumph.

"You've just come in time, Mrs. Baxter"—for Jean had been putting herself in order—"for I want to give you a bit of advice. Do not lift any more of your plants—it's bad for their growth; and I rather think you'll have to put them back." *The Days of Auld Lang Syne.*

April 19

THE richest heritage of an old congregation is not her endowments, but her history, the names of saints which can be read on her faded rolls, and the record of their works. The ambition of a new congregation ought to be the attainment of a worthy model in its first plastic years. For character is transmitted in ecclesiastical as surely as in family life, so that men have the hereditary features of their congregation — a certain accent in doctrine, a certain manner in work, a certain attitude of faith.

The Cure of Souls.



April 20

JESUS did not create goodness — her fair form had been already carved in white marble by austere hands; His office was to place a soul within the ribs of death till the cold stone changed into a living body. Before Jesus, goodness was sterile, since Jesus, goodness has blossomed; He fertilised it with His spirit. It was a theory, it became a force. He took the corn, which had been long stored in the granaries of philosophy, and sowed it in the soft spring earth; He minted the gold and made it current coin. Christianity is in Religion what steam is in mechanics, the power which drives.

The Mind of the Master.

April 21

“THIS is what ye hev dune, and ye let a woman see yir wark. Ye are an auld man, and in sore travail, but a’ tell ye before God ye hae the greater shame. Juist twenty years o’ age this spring, and her mither dead. Nae wooman to watch over her, and she wan-dered frae the fold, and a’ ye can dae is to tak her oot o’ yir Bible. Wae’s me if oor Father had blotted out oor names frae the Book o’ Life when we left His hoose. But He sent His ain Son to seek us, an’ a weary road He cam. A’ tell ye, a man wudna leave a sheep tae perish as ye hae cast aff yir ain bairn.”

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.



April 22

TWO possessions we shall carry with us into the unseen : they are free of death, and inalienable — one is character, the other is capacity. Is this capacity to be consigned to idleness and wantonly wasted ? It were unreason : it were almost a crime. How this or that gift can be utilised in the other world is a vain question, and leads to childish speculation. We do not know where the unseen universe is, nor how it is constituted, much less how it is ordered, but our reason may safely conclude that the capacity which is exercised under one form here will be exercised under another yonder.

The Mind of the Master.

April 23

IT seemeth to us, when we are still young, both clever and profitable to make a hearer ashamed of his sin by putting him in the pillory and pelting him with epithets. Such is the incurable perversity of human nature, that the man grows worse under the discipline, and even conceives an unconscionable dislike to the officer of justice.

The Cure of Souls.



April 24

JEREMIAH SAUNDERSON had remained in the low estate of a "probationer" for twelve years after he left the Divinity Hall, where he was reported so great a scholar that the Professor of Apologetics spoke to him deprecatingly, and the Professor of Dogmatics openly consulted him on obscure writers. He had wooed twenty-three congregations in vain, from churches in the black country, where the colliers rose in squares of twenty, and went out without ceremony, to suburban places of worship where the beadle, after due consideration of the sermon, would take up the afternoon notices and ask that they be read at once for purposes of utility, which that unflinching functionary stated to the minister with accuracy and much faithfulness.

Kate Carnegie.

April 25

CHRIST did not ground His Christianity in thinking, or in doing, but, first of all, in being. It consisted in a certain type of soul—a spiritual shape of the inner self. Was a man satisfied with this type, and would he aim at it in his own life? Would he put his name to the Sermon on the Mount, and place himself under Jesus' charge for its accomplishment? Then he was a Christian according to the conditions laid down by Jesus in the fresh daybreak of His religion.

The Mind of the Master.



April 26

SOMETIMES the pastor receives a sudden impulse to go to a certain house, and whether it come to him in his room or on the street, he obeys it with all possible speed. On the way he will reproach himself because he may be going on a needless errand, and he will be abashed on the door-step because he has no excuse for calling. He needs none, as it appears, for he discovers in nine cases out of ten that he is needed in that house, and that his arrival is considered a providence. It is really something higher and finer—a guidance of the Chief Shepherd by the inward light of His Spirit.

The Cure of Souls.

April 27

BUT not even Hillocks, with all his blandishments, could wile them within-doors that evening. John Ross saw his mother shading her eyes at the garden gate, and wearying for the sight of his head above the hill, and already David Baxter seemed to hear his father's voice, "God bless ye, laddie ; welcome hame, an' weel dune." For the choice reward of a true man's work is not the applause of the street, which comes and goes, but the pride of them that love him.

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.



April 28

THE Lodge had never been long without a young widow and a fatherless lad, but family history had no warning for him — in fact, seemed rather to be an inspiration in the old way — for no sooner had the young laird loved and married than he would hear of another rebellion, and ride off some morning to fight for that ill-fated dynasty the love of which was ever another name for death. There was always a Carnegie ready as soon as the white cockade appeared anywhere in Scotland, and each of the house fought like the men before him, save that he brought fewer at his back and had less in his pocket.

Kate Carnegie.

April 29

NO one can fail to notice that Jesus spent His life for the most part in the open air, and that the Gospels carry on them the breath of the country. He founded His kingdom on a hillside, where the wind blew as it listed, and His chosen oratory was under the silver olive-trees. Time and again Jesus fled to the desert, where the pasture-lilies grew in their unclothed multitude, or to some solitary place where He could be alone with God in the cool and silent night.

The Upper Room.



April 30

MORAL truths ripen slowly; but given time, and Christianity was bound to become the most potent force in the state, although Jesus had never said one word about politics, and His apostles had adhered closely to His example. Men who have been fed with Christ's bread, and in whose heart His spirit is striving, will not long tolerate slavery, tyranny, vice, or ignorance. If they do not apply the principle to the fact to-day, they will to-morrow. Their conscience is helpless in the grip of Christ's word. They will be constrained to labour in the cause of Christ, and when their work is done men will praise them. *The Mind of the Master.*

May

WHEN George came home for the last time, Marget went back and forward all afternoon from his bedroom to the window, and hid herself beneath the laburnum to see his face as the cart stood before the stile. It told her plain what she had feared, and Marget passed through her Gethsemane with the gold blossoms falling on her face. When their eyes met, and before she helped him down, mother and son understood.

"Ye mind what I told ye, o' the Greek mothers, the day I left. Weel, I wud hae liked to have carried my shield, but it wasna to be, so I've come home on it." As they went slowly up the garden walk, "I've got my degree, a double first, mathematics and classics."

"Ye've been a gude soldier, George, and faithfu'."

"Unto death, a 'm dootin', mother."

"Na," said Marget, "unto life."

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.

May 1

WHEN a good cause finds a befitting leader, it will be victorious before set of sun. David had about him such a grace of beauty and chivalry that his officers risked their lives to bring him a cup of water, and his people carried him to the throne of Israel on the love of their hearts. Human nature has two dominant instincts — the spring of all action as well as the subject of all literature — Faith and Love. The religion which unites them will be omnipotent.

The Mind of the Master.



May 2

THE conclusive proof that we are already in the midst of a true and sane mysticism is the instinctive return to Christ, where on every side and from all schools Christian souls are making for their place of birth, as fish find again their native stream. Many traditions have been swept away, and many theories laid aside; but above the dust of controversy rises the face of Christ. Surely there has been no age since that early morn, when the echo of His footsteps was still on earth, and His very appearance in the flesh was remembered, wherein Christians have been so anxious to understand what Jesus was and what He taught.

The Cure of Souls.

May 3

IF the proletariat is to be won for Christ, it will not be by patronage, but by brotherly sympathy and co-operation. The ideal is that a Church of the west and another of the east should go into partnership, combining their resources of means and men, and so the gaping wounds of society will be bound and healed; for Christ alone, by His humanity and Church, can be the meeting-place for all kinds and conditions of men.

The Cure of Souls.



May 4

JESUS wrote no book; He formed no system; His words were jets of truth, and chose their own forms. The Empire was not within the consciousness of Jesus: His only point of contact with Rome was the Cross. When His following wished to make Him a King, He shuddered and fled as from an insult. As for wealth, it seemed so dangerous that He laid poverty as a condition on His disciples, and Himself knew not where to lay His head. You cannot trace Jesus: you cannot analyse Jesus. His intense spirituality of soul, His simplicity of thought, His continual self-abnegation, and His unaffected humility descended on a worn-out hopeless world, like dew upon the dry grass.

The Mind of the Master.

May 5

“DEAR MISS CARNEGIE,—They say that a woman always knows when a man loves her, and if so you will not be astonished at this letter. From that day I saw you in Drumtochty Kirk I have loved you, and every week I love you more. My mother is the only other woman I have ever cared for, and that is different. Will you be my wife? . . . You will have all my heart, and I'll do my best to make you happy.

“I am, yours very sincerely,

“HAY.”

Kate Carnegie.

May 6

“DEAR LORD HAY,—You have done me the greatest honour any woman can receive at your hands, and for two days I have thought of nothing else. If it were enough that your wife should like and respect you, then I would at once accept you as my betrothed, but as it is plain to me that no woman ought to marry any one unless she also loves him, I am obliged to refuse one of the truest men I have ever met, for whom I have a very kindly place in my heart, and whose happiness I shall always desire. — Believe me, yours sincerely,

“KATE CARNEGIE.”

Kate Carnegie.

May 7

IT goes without saying that Jesus' sense of the Fatherhood must be supreme. It is a contradiction of the Gospels to say that it was exclusive. Jesus toiled for three years to write the truth of the Fatherhood on the minds of the disciples, with at least one result, that it is interwoven with the pattern of the Gospels. He pleaded also with His friends that they should receive it into their hearts till St. John filled his epistles with this word. With minute and affectionate care, Jesus described the whole circle of religious thought, and stated it in terms of the Fatherhood.

The Mind of the Master.



May 8

THE minister stood still before that spectacle, his face bathed in the golden glory, and then before his eyes the gold deepened into an awful red, and the red passed into shades of violet and green, beyond painter's hand or the imagination of man. It seemed to him as if a victorious saint had entered through the gates into the city, washed in the blood of the Lamb, and the after-glow of his mother's life fell solemnly on his soul. The last trace of sunset had faded from the hills when the minister came in, and his face was of one who had seen a vision.

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.

May 9

WHEN the first ray shot through the window and trembled on the bed, Jamie raised himself and listened. He shaded his eyes with his hand, as if he were watching for some one and could not see clearly for excess of light.

"Menie!" he cried suddenly, with a new voice, "a've keepit oor tryst."

When they laid him in the coffin — the Bible in his hands — the smile was still on his face, and he appeared a man some forty years of age.

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.



May 10

JESUS' Kingdom commends itself to the imagination because it is to come, when God's will is done on earth as it is done in heaven — it is the Kingdom of the Beatitudes. It commends itself to the reason because it has come wherever any one is attempting God's will — it is the Kingdom of the Parables. An ideal state, it ever allures and inspires its subjects ; a real state, it sustains, commands them. Had Jesus conceived His Kingdom as in the future only, He had made His disciples dreamers ; had He centred it in the present only, He had made them theorists. As it is, one labours on its building with a splendid model before his eyes ; one possesses it in his heart, and yet is ever entering into its fulness.

The Mind of the Master.

May 11

BETWEEN our science and every other there is this difference, that in other departments of knowledge one must know to love, in Christian theology one must love to know. In vain will be every place of learning, however thoroughly equipped, and any masters, however scholarly ; in vain will be all books and study, if the soul have no spiritual vision.



The Cure of Souls.

May 12

JESUS' idea lifts Christianity above the plane of arid discussion and places it in the region of poetry, where the emotions have full play and Faith is vision. Theology becomes the explanation of the fellowship between the soul and Jesus. Regeneration is the entrance into His life, Justification the partaking of His Cross, Sanctification the transformation into His character, Death the coming of the Lord, Heaven His unveiled Face. Doctrines will be but moods of the Christ-consciousness; parables of the Christ-life. Suffering will be the baptism of Jesus and the drinking of His cup, and if every saint have not the stigmata on his hands and feet, he will at least, like Simon the Cyrenian, have the mark of the Cross upon his shoulder. And service will be the personal tribute to Jesus, whom we shall recognise under any disguise.

The Mind of the Master.

May 13

ILLUSTRATION is either panoramic or miniature painting, but, on the whole, must be on the larger rather than on the smaller scale. Whether it be description or allusion, the illustration is never to be used as a mere opportunity of displaying the speaker's eloquence or learning. It is not a pyrotechnic display before which a crowd stands in admiration, but a lamp by whose light the traveller finds his way along the dark street.

The Cure of Souls.



May 14

“THERE’S some o’ thae Muirtown drapers can busk oot their windows that ye canna pass without lookin’; there’s bits o’ blue and bits o’ red, and a ribbon here an’ a lace yonder.

“It’s a bonnie show and denty, an’ no wunner the lassies stan’ and stare.

“But gae intae the shop, and peety me, there’s next tae naethin’; it’s a’ in the window.

“Noo, that’s Maister Popinjay, as neat an’ fikey a little mannie as ever a’ saw in a black goon.

“His bit sermon wes six poems — five a’ hed heard afore — four anecdotes — three aboot himsel’ and ain aboot a lord — twa burnies, ae floo’r gairden, and a snowstorm, wi’ the text thirteen times and ‘beloved’ twal; that was a’; a takin’ window, and Netherton’s lassies cudna sleep thinkin’ o’ him.” *Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.*

May 15

NEITHER this world in its poverty nor the next in its wealth is to be compared with life, any more than a body with a soul. The great loss of the present is to exchange your life for this world, the great gain in the world to come is still to obtain life. The point of connection between the seen and the unseen—the only bridge that spans the gulf—is life. In this state of things we settle its direction, in the next we shall see its perfection. According to the drift of Jesus' preaching, the whole spiritual content of this present life, its knowledge, skill, aspirations, character, will be carried over into the future, and life hereafter be the continuation of life here.

The Mind of the Master.



May 16

HIS aunt could only meet him in the study, and when he looked on her his lip quivered, for his heart was wrung with one wistful regret.

"Oh, auntie, if she had only been spared to see this day, and her prayers answered."

But his aunt flung her arms round his neck.

"Dinna be cast doon, laddie, nor be unbelievin'. Yir mither has heard every word, and is satisfied, for ye did it in remembrance o' her, and yon was yir mither's sermon."

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.

May 17

TRAVEL must be used very skilfully and sparingly, because the Righi and the Bay of Naples are not now unknown to a congregation. On the whole, it may be also better for the average man not to go to the Holy Land for the sake of his people unless he has great self-control.

The Cure of Souls.



May 18

BOOK-SHELVES had long ago failed to accommodate Rabbi's treasures, and the floor had been bravely utilised. Islands of books, rugged and perpendicular, rose on every side; long promontories reached out from the shore, varied by bold headlands; and so broken and varied was that floor that the Rabbi was pleased to call it the *Ægean Sea*, where he had his Lesbos and his Samos. It is absolutely incredible, but it is all the same a simple fact, that he knew every book and its location, having a sense of the feel as well as the shape of his favourites. This was not because he had the faintest approach to orderliness—for he would take down twenty volumes and never restore them to the same place by any chance. It was a sort of motherly instinct by which he watched over them all, even loved prodigals that wandered over all the study and then set off on adventurous journeys into distant rooms.

Kate Carnegie.

May 19

WERE it possible to place a foolscap on one of our most sublime ideas, and turn immortality itself into an absurdity, it is done when a vulgar imagination has peddled with the details of the future, and has accomplished a travesty of the Revelation of St. John. From time to time ignorant charlatans will trade on religious simplicity and trifles with sacred emotions, whose foolishness and profanity go before them unto judgment. Heaven is the noblest imagination of the human heart, and any one who robs this imagination of its august dignity and spiritual splendour has committed a crime.

The Mind of the Master.



May 20

WHEN they parted that Sabbath afternoon it was the younger man that had lost his temper, and the other did not offer to shake hands.

Perhaps the minister would have understood Lachlan better if he had known that the old man could not touch food when he got home, and spent the evening in a fir wood praying for the lad he had begun to love. And Lachlan would have had a lighter heart if he had heard the minister questioning himself whether he had denied the Evangel or sinned against one of Christ's disciples. They argued together ; they prayed apart.

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.

May 21

THE minister ought to be soaked in life ; not that his sermons may never escape from local details, but rather that, being in contact with the life nearest him, he may state his gospel in terms of human experience. No doctrine of the Christian Faith is worth preserving which cannot be verified in daily life, and no doctrine will need to be defended when stated in human terms — above all, in the language of Home.

The Cure of Souls.



May 22

"WE'RE a' sorry for Burnbrae, for the brunt o' the battle 'ill fa' on him, an' he 's been a gude neebur tae a'body, but there's nae fear o' him buying his lease wi' his kirk. Ma certes, the factor chose the worst man in the Glen for an affgo. Burnbrae wud raither see his hale plenishing gae doon the Tochty than play Judas to his kirk. It 's an awfu' peety that oor auld Scotch kirk wes split, and it wud be a heartsome sicht tae see the Glen a' aneath ae roof aince a week. But ae thing we maun grant, the Disruption lat the warld ken there wes some spunk in Scotland. There 's nae man a' wud raither welcome tae oor kirk than Burnbrae, gin he cam o' his ain free will, but it wud be better that the kirk sud stand empty than be filled wi' a factor's hirelings."

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.

May 23

THEOLOGICAL pedantry had done its work in the days of Jesus, and had reduced the sublime ethics of the Old Testament to a wearisome absurdity. The beneficent law of rest, so full of sympathy with struggling people, was translated into a series of regulations of peddling detail and incredible childishness. The "clean heart" of the prophets sank into an endless washing of hands, and filial piety was wantonly outraged that the temple taxes might be swollen. Jewish faith had become a painted show, a husk in which the kernel had withered.

The Mind of the Master.



May 24

THE contrast is not between those who worship in churches and those who worship at home, but between those whose faith in the Risen Christ is so real and strong that it draws men together on the first day of the week to celebrate His resurrection, by which He has become the Living Way unto the Father, and those to whom this chief event in human history is a fond imagination, and whose idea of God is so vague and impersonal, that they can find Him in the running of a stream as surely as in the face of Christ.

The Cure of Souls.

May 25

CARMICHAEL was standing in the shadow as Saunderson came along the road, and the faint light was a perfect atmosphere for the dear old bookman. Standing at his full height he might have been six feet, but, with much poring over books and meditation, he had descended some three inches. His hair was long, not because he made any conscious claim to genius, but because he forgot to get it cut, and, with his flowing, untrimmed beard, was now quite grey. Within his clothes he was the merest skeleton, being so thin that his shoulder-blades stood out in sharp outline, and his hands were almost transparent. The redeeming feature in Saunderson was his eyes, which were large and eloquent, of a trustful, wistful hazel, the beautiful eyes of a dumb animal.

Kate Carnegie.



May 26

JESUS did not ignore the black shadow of sin; He did not fall into the sickly optimism of last century. Jesus did not regard man as the sport of a cruel Fate; He did not yield to the gloomy pessimism which is settling down on this dying century. He illuminated the darkness of human misery with the light of a Divine purpose, and made the evidence for despair an argument for hope. *The Mind of the Master.*

May 27

WHEN a speaker is pleading a great cause, and sees hard-headed men glaring before them with such ferocity that every one knows they are afraid of breaking down, let him stop in the middle of a paragraph and take the collection, and if he be declaring the Evangel, and a certain tenderness comes over the faces of the people, let him close his words to them and call them to prayer.

The Cure of Souls.



May 28

"JAMIE," and a flush of joy came over the pale, thin face, that he would hardly have recognised, "this is gude . . . o' ye . . . tae come sae far, . . . a' wes wantin' . . . tae see a Drumtochty face afore a' ——" Then the tears choked her words.

"Ou ay," began Jamie with deliberation. "You see, a' wes up lookin' aifter some o' Drumsheugh's fat cattle that he sent aff tae the London market, so of coorse a' cudna be here without giein' ye a cry.

"It wes a ploy tae find ye, juist like hide-an'-seek, but, ma certes, ye hev got a fine hame at laist," and Jamie appraised the dainty bed, the soft carpet, the little table with ice and fruit and flowers, at their untold value of kindness.

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.

May 29

NO Christian man now believes that a word can be said for slavery. No one now would be moved by a hundred texts in its favour. Slavery has been condemned both by the spirit and by the teaching of Jesus. When He taught the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man followed, and the end of slavery became merely a matter of time. It is growing clearer that many doctrines of Christian men are not lasting, but that every word of Jesus is eternal.

The Mind of the Master.



May 30

HE is a good wife who manages the minister's house with skill and economy, so that he has to give no thought to domestic affairs, who brings up her children in the Divine Love, whose father has so little time for their oversight, who carries herself so wisely and kindly among his people that none are offended — for they have a sense of property in her too which is very pleasant: who advises her husband on every important matter, and often restrains him from hasty speech; and who receives him weary, discouraged, irritable, and sends him out again strong, hopeful, sweet-tempered.

The Cure of Souls.

May 31

"**M**A bairn! ma bairn! God hae mercy upon her!" and Elspeth's cry ran through the bonnie birk wood and rose through the smiling sky to a God that seemed to give no heed.

"Whar is she?" was all Posty asked, tearing off his coat and waistcoat, for he had heard the cry as he was going to the mill, and took the lade at a leap to lose no time.

"Yonder, Posty, but ye . . ."

He was already in the depths, while the mother hung over the edge of the merciless flood. It seemed an hour — it was not actually a minute — before he appeared, with the blood pouring from a gash on his forehead, and hung for a few seconds on a rock for air.

"Come oot, Posty; ye hae a wife an' bairns, an' ye 'll be drooned!" for Elspeth was a brave-hearted, unselfish woman.

"A 'll hae Elsie first," and down he went again, where the torrent raged against the rocks.

This time he came up at once, with Elsie, a poor little bundle, in his arms.

"Tak her quick!" he gasped, clinging with one hand to a jagged point.

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.

June

“THIS is the last time we shall meet, Miss Carnegie. Forgive me for my love, and believe that one man will ever remember and . . . pray for you.”

Carmichael bowed low, the last sunshine of the evening playing on his fair hair, and turned to go.

“One word, if you please,” said Kate, and they looked into one another’s eyes, the blue and brown, seeing many things that cannot be written. “You may be forgiven for . . . loving me, because you could not help that” — this with a very roguish look, our Kate all over — “and I suppose you must be forgiven for listening to foolish gossip, since people will tell lies” — this with a stamp of the foot, our Kate again — “but I shall never forgive you if you leave me, never” — this was a new Kate, like to the opening of a flower.

“Why? Tell me plainly;” and in the silence Carmichael heard a trout leap in the river.

“Because I love you.”

The Tochty water sang a pleasant song, and the sun set gloriously behind Ben Urtach.

Kate Carnegie.

June 1

WE must simply accept the words of Jesus, and it is an unspeakable relief to find our Master crowning His teaching on character with the scene of the Last Judgment. The prophecy of conscience will not be put to shame, nor the continuity of this life be broken. When the parabolic form is reduced and the accidental details laid aside, it remains that the Book of Judgment is the Sermon on the Mount, and that each soul is tried by its likeness to the Judge Himself. Jesus has prepared the world for a startling surprise, but it will not be the contradiction of our present moral experience: it will be the revelation of our present hidden character.

The Mind of the Master.



June 2

IT is insulting to the preacher to suppose that because he journeyed towards the south pole to-day he denies the north pole, and exasperating to the hearers to be hurried backwards and forwards in opposite directions lest they should rush to extremes. Preacher and hearers should give themselves to one idea with as much concentration as if there were not another in the universe of thought. This is to focus the mind.

The Cure of Souls.

June 3

B EYOND all question, and apart from all theories, Jesus is the Revelation of the Divine goodness: the incarnate Law of God: the objective conscience of Humanity. As soon as we enter the presence of Jesus we lose the liberty of moral indifference. One Person we cannot avoid —the inevitable Christ; one dilemma we must face, “What shall I do with Jesus which is called Christ?” The spiritual majesty of this Man arraigns us at His bar from which we cannot depart till we become His disciples or His critics, His friends or His enemies.

The Mind of the Master.



June 4

T HERE is a certain point where the road from Kildrummie disentangles itself from the wood, and begins the descent to Tochty Bridge. Drumtochty exiles used to stand there for a space and rest their eyes on the Glen which they could now see, from the hills that made its western wall to the woods of Tochty that began below the parish kirk; and though each man might not be able to detect the old home, he had some landmark — a tree, or a rise of the hill — to distinguish the spot where he was born, and, if such were still his good fortune, where true hearts were waiting to bid him welcome.

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.

June 5

“ A LMICHTY FATHER, we are a’ Thy
puir and sinfu’ bairns, wha wearied o’
hame and gaed awa’ intae the far country. For-
give us, for we didna ken what we were leavin’
or the sair hert we gied oor Father. It was weary
wark tae live wi’ oor sins, but we wud never
hev come back had it no been for oor Elder
Brither. He cam’ a long road tae find us,
and a sore travail He had afore He set us free.
He’s been a gude Brither tae us, and we’ve
been a heavy chairge tae Him. May He keep
a firm haud o’ us, and guide us in the richt
road, and bring us back gin we wander, and
tell us a’ we need tae know till the gloamin’
come. Gither us in then, we pray Thee, and
a’ we luve, no a bairn missin’, and may we sit
doon for ever in oor ain Father’s House.
Amen.”

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.



June 6

THE preacher may then congratulate him-
self, for no teacher is satisfied till he has
so lodged an idea in the mind that his people
claim it as his own. He has an ample reward
for his pains, when his people some day turn
upon him and threaten to rend him for criticis-
ing an idea which he himself taught them in
the agony of his soul, and which they guard
jealously as their personal property.

The Cure of Souls.

June 7

VERY early in the morning Carmichael awoke, and being tempted by the sunrise, arose and went downstairs. As he came near the study door he heard a voice in prayer, and knew that the Rabbi had been all night in intercession.

"Thou hast denied me wife and child; deny me not Thyself. . . . A stranger Thou hast made me among men; refuse me not a place in the City. . . . Deal graciously with this lad who has been to me as a son in the Gospel. . . . He has not despised an old man; put not his heart to confusion. . . ."

Kate Carnegie.



June 8

JESUS utilises the great parable of the Family for the last time; and as He had invested Fatherhood and Sonhood with their highest meaning so He now spiritualises Home. What Mary's cottage at Bethany had been to the little company during the Holy Week, with its quiet rest after the daily turmoil of Jerusalem; what some humble house on the shore of Galilee was to St. John, with its associations of Salome; what the great Temple was to the pious Jews, with its Presence of the Eternal, that on the higher scale was Heaven. Jesus availed Himself of a wealth of tender recollections and placed Heaven in the heart of humanity when He said, "My Father's House."

The Mind of the Master.

June 9

THERE is no audience which does not expect a certain elevation of style in religious speech, and which does not resent what is vulgar or technical. A preacher does not conciliate an uneducated audience by the use of slang or lapses into buffoonery, nor does he please cultured people by scholastic terms. People have an instinct about what they like to hear from the pulpit, and their desire is the language of the home and the market-place, raised to its highest power and glorified.

The Cure of Souls.



June 10

SOME have argued that Religion is the fulfilment of duty; this is to settle Religion in the conscience and to reduce it to morality. Some have insisted that Religion is the acceptance of revealed truth; this is to settle Religion in the reason, and to resolve Religion into knowledge. Some have pleaded that Religion is a state of feeling; this is to settle Religion in the heart and to dissolve it into emotion. The philosopher, the theologian, the mystic can each make out a good case, for each has without doubt represented a side of Religion. None of the three can exclude the other two; all three cannot include Religion.

The Mind of the Master.

June 11

“WHEN a’ entered this hoose ma hert wes sair, for a’ thocht a defenceless lassie hed been ill-used in her straits, an’ noo a’ wud like to apologizeeze for ma hot words.”

“Toots, man, what nonsense is this you’re talking?” said Sir Andrew; “you don’t understand the situation. The fact is, I wanted to study Lily’s case, and it was handier to have her in my house. Just medical selfishness.”

“A’ micht hae thocht o’ that,” and the intelligence in Jamie’s eye was so sympathetic that Sir Andrew quailed before it. “We hev a doctor in oor pairish that ’s yir verra marra [equal] —aye practeesin’ on the sick fouk, and for lookin’ aifter himsel’ he passes belief.”

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.



June 12

WHEN Jamie parted with Drumsheugh on the way home, and turned down the road to Mary’s cottage, to give her the lilies and a full account of her lassie, Drumsheugh watched him till he disappeared.

“Thirty pund wes what he drew frae the Muirtown bank oot o’ his savin’s, for the clerk telt me himsel’, and naebody jalouses the trick. It’s the cleverest thing Jamie ever did, an’ aye o’ the best a’ ve seen in Drumtochty.”

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.

June 13

RELIGION with Jesus is not merely an influence diffused through our spiritual nature like heat through iron ; it has a separate existence. Religion is not a nomad that has to receive hospitality in some foreign department of the soul ; it has its own home and habitation. It is a faculty of our constitution as much as Conscience or Reason, with its own sphere of operations and peculiar function. . . . Jesus did not create Religion, it is a human instinct. He defined it, and Jesus' synonym for the faculty of Religion is Faith.

The Mind of the Master.



June 14

WE are all apt, as preachers, to be brow-beaten and reduced to silence by the impudent assertion that an average audience has no interest in theology, and will only listen to us upon the astounding condition that we do not give them the one thing we are supposed to have thoroughly learned. They expect from a historian history, from a geologist geology, but from a teacher of theology—and we are the only teachers of theology for the public—anything, however remote from the subject, provided it be neither very solid nor thoughtful.

The Cure of Souls.

June 15

HAD Jesus repeated the hackneyed programme of negation with a table of "shalt nots," He would have afforded another dreary instance of moral failure. When Jesus published His positive principle of Love, and left each man to draw up his own table, He gave a brilliant pledge of spiritual success. By this magical word of Love He not only brought the dry bones together and made a unity; He clothed them with flesh and made a living body. He may have forfeited the name of moralist, He has gained the name of Saviour.

The Mind of the Master.



June 16

OF course a system in its bare outlines is unsightly and repulsive, and people have complained, with fair reason, of the dry bones of doctrine. An uncovered skeleton is certainly a very unlovely object, and defies the art of speech, but it lies behind the rounded grace of Venus de Medici, and alone sustains the weight of language. How far the closely knit and symmetrical form ought to appear through the flesh and blood may be matter of taste, there being, so to say, masculine and feminine contours of thought, but luxuriance and winsomeness must rest on strength. *The Cure of Souls.*

June 17

WE did not speak of the "higher life," nor of a "beautiful Christian," for this way of putting it would not have been in keeping with the genius of Drumtochty. Religion there was very lowly and modest — an inward walk with God. No man boasted of himself, none told the secrets of the soul. But the Glen took notice of its saints, and did them silent reverence, which they themselves never knew.

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.



June 18

WE have a robust common sense of morality which refuses to believe that it does not matter whether a man has lived like the Apostle Paul or the Emperor Nero. One may hesitate to speculate about the circumstances of the other world; one may love the splendid imagination of the Apocalypse more than the vulgar realism of modern sentiment, but one can never crush out the conviction that there must be one place for St. John, who was Jesus' friend, and another for Judas Iscariot, who was His betrayer. It were unreasonable that this mad confusion of circumstances should continue, which ties up the saint and the miscreant together to the misery of both; it were supremely reasonable that this tangle be unravelled and each receive his satisfaction.

The Mind of the Master.

June 19

HE was a minister of Dunleith, whose farmers preferred to play ball against the wall of the kirk to hearing him preach, and gave him insolence on his offering a pious remonstrance. Whereupon the Davidson of that day, being, like all his race, short in stature but mighty in strength, first beat the champion player one Sabbath morning at his own game to tame an unholy pride, and then thrashed him with his fist to do good to his soul. This happy achievement in practical theology secured an immediate congregation, and produced so salutary an effect on the schismatic ball-player that he became in due course an elder, and was distinguished for his severity in dealing with persons absenting themselves from public worship, or giving themselves over-much to vain amusements.

Kate Carnegie.



June 20

OUR attitude to self-appointed religious speakers, and that of the medical profession to quacks, is a striking contrast. We, as a rule, welcome this assistance, in the public interest, and doctors will have none of it, also in the public interest. Both professions are quite unselfish. Which is in the long-run right?

The Cure of Souls.

June 21

IT is surely a narrow mind, and worse—a narrow heart—that would belittle the noble sayings that fell from the lips of outside saints or discredit the virtues of their character. Is it not more respectful to God, the Father of mankind, and more in keeping with the teaching of the Son of man, to believe that everywhere and in all ages can be found not only the prophecies and broken gleams, but also the very children of the kingdom? In Clement's noble words, “Some with the consciousness of what Jesus is to them, others not as yet; some as friends, others as faithful servants, others barely as servants.”

The Mind of the Master.



June 22

THIS evening the years that were gone came back to Burnbrae. For a townsman may be born in one city and educated in a second, and married in a third, and work in a fourth. His houses are but inns, which he uses and forgets; he has no roots, and is a vagrant on the face of the earth. But the countryman is born and bred, and marries and toils and dies on one farm, and the scene he looks at in his old age is the same he saw in his boyhood. His roots are struck deep into the soil, and if you tear them up, his heart withers and dies.

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.

June 23

"MODERATOR, this is a terrible calamity that hes befaen oor brither, and a'm feelin' as if a' hed lost a bairn o' my ane, for a sweeter lassie didna cross oor kirk door. Nane o' us want tae know what hes happened or where she hes gane, and no a word o' this wull cross oor lips. Her faither's dune mair than cud be expeckit o' mortal man, and noo we have oor duty. It's no the way o' this Session tae cut aff ony member o' the flock at a stroke, and we'll no begin with Flora Campbell. A' move, Moderator, that her case be left tae her faither and yersel, and oor neebur may depend on it that Flora's name and his ain will be mentioned in oor prayers, ilka mornin' an' nicht till the gude Shepherd o' the sheep brings her hame."

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.



June 24

EVERY strong and clean word used of the people as they buy and sell, joy and sorrow, labour and suffer, should be in the preacher's store, but he should add thereto splendid and gracious words from Milton and Spenser, from Goldsmith and Addison, and other masters of the English tongue. The ground may be a homely and serviceable grey, but through it should run a thread of gold.

The Cure of Souls.

June 25

HE joineth Himself as by an accident to men on the ways of life, and afterwards maketh as though He would go farther. When they constrain Him to abide, it does not matter whether the soul be as a palace or a cottage; He will enter, and the tenant will become a saint.

The Upper Room.

WHEN the Evangel ceased, "or fell into contempt, the Church grew weak and corrupt. When the Evangel asserted its ancient authority, the Church arose and put on her "beautiful garments."

The Cure of Souls.



June 26

THE ages were linked together by a long tragedy of disappointment and vanity, but the Tochty ran now as in the former days. What was any human life but a drop in the river that flowed without ceasing to the unknown sea? What could any one do but yield himself to necessity, and summon his courage to endure? Then at the singing of a bird his mood lightened and was changed, as if he had heard the Evangel. God was over all, and life was immortal, and he could not be wrong who did the will of God. After a day of conflict peace came to his soul, and in the soft light of the setting sun he rose to go home.

Kate Carnegie.

June 27

MARGET'S was an old-fashioned garden, with pinks and daisies and forget-me-nots, with sweet-scented wall-flower and thyme and moss-roses, where nature had her way, and gracious thoughts could visit one without any jarring note. As George's voice softened to the close, I caught her saying, "His servants shall see His face," and the peace of Paradise fell upon us in the shadow of death.

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.



June 28

WHEN the kingdom comes in its greatness, it will fulfil every religion and destroy none, clearing away the imperfect and opening up reaches of goodness not yet imagined, till it has gathered into its bosom whatsoever things are true and honest and just and pure and lovely. It standeth on the earth as the city of God with its gates open by night and by day, into which entereth nothing that defileth, but into which is brought the glory and power of the nations. It is the natural home of the good; as Zwingli, the Swiss reformer, said in his dying confession, "Not one good man, one holy spirit, one faithful soul, whom you will not then behold with God."

The Mind of the Master.

June 29

YEAR after year some nameless monk labours on a rough block in some cathedral column till it turns into the very likeness of Christ. He dies, and they bury him in a forgotten grave ; but every morning the light, streaming through the eastern window over the head of Christ as from the eyes of the Judge, touches with gold that image of the Lord wrought by His servant, and as the generations pace the aisles beneath, high above them, beautiful and unchanging, remains the unknown worker's memorial.

The Cure of Souls.



June 30

“ A' LEFT the schule afore she cam, an' the first time a' ever kent Marget richt wes the day she settled wi' her mither in the cottar's hoose on Drumsheugh, an' she's hed ma hert sin' that 'oor.

“ It wesna her winsome face nor her gentle ways that drew me, Weelum; it wes . . . her soul, the gudeness 'at lookit oot on the warld through yon grey een, sae serious, thochtfu', kindly.

“ Nae man cud say a rouch word or hae an ill thocht in her presence ; she made ye better juist tae hear her speak an' stan' aside her at the wark.”

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.

July

"I WOULD like to speak to you about the Sacrament ; it was lovely."

"Ye dae me much honour, Miss Carnegie," and Marget slightly flushed, "an' much pleasure, for there is naething dearer tae me than keeping the Sacrament ; it is my joy every day and muckle comfort in life."

"But I thought you had it only once a year ?" questioned Kate.

"With bread and wine in outward sign that is once, and maybe eneuch, for it makes ane high day for us all, but div ye not think, Miss Carnegie, that all our life should be ane Sacrament ?"

"Tell me," said Kate, looking into Marget's sweet, spiritual face.

"Is it no' the picture of His Luve, who thocht o' everybody but Himsel', an' saved everybody but Himsel', an' didna He say we maun drink His cup and live His life ?"

Kate only signed that Marget should go on.

"Noo a'm judgin' that ilka ane o's is savit juist as we are baptised intae the Lord's death, and ilka time ane o's keeps back a hot word, or humbles a proud heart, or serves anither at a cost, we have eaten the Body and drunk the Blood o' the Lord."

Kate Carnegie.

July 1

IS not every man conscious of a strange duality, so that he seems two men? There is the self who is proud, envious, jealous—a lower self. There is the self which is modest, generous, ungrudging—a higher self. Just as the lower self is repressed the higher lives; just as the lower is pampered the higher dies. We are conscious of this conflict and desire that the evil self be crushed, mortified, killed; that the better self be liberated, fed, developed. It goes without saying that the victory of the evil self would be destruction, that the victory of the better self would be salvation.

The Mind of the Master.



July 2

WHEN a minister leads his people in the return to Christ, it is well for him to avoid two extremes. He must neither go to the Gospels alone, for there he is dealing with an earthly Christ, nor to the heavens alone, for then is he dealing with an unknown Christ, but to Him Who is alive for evermore, and Whom we have in the Gospels. Criticism gives us the historical Christ, and mysticism gives us the spiritual Christ, and both united give us the real Christ.

The Cure of Souls.

July 3

CRITICISM has rendered two great services to the working ministry, and one is apologetical. Almost all the moral attacks upon the Bible, which may have been cheap, but which were very embarrassing, fall to the ground as soon as the Bible is seen to be a progressive and gradual revelation.

Criticism has also handed the Bible to the working minister re-arranged, re-edited, re-bound, and so in this way made it for his purpose a more intelligible and interesting book.

The Cure of Souls.



July 4

AS each nation suffers, it prospers ; as it ceases to suffer, it decays. Our England was begotten in the sore travail of Elizabeth's day. The American nation sprang from the sons of martyrs. United Germany was baptised in blood. The pioneers of science have lived hardly. The most original philosopher of modern times ground glasses for a living, and was the victim of incurable disease. The master poem of English speech was written by a blind and forsaken Puritan. The New World was found in spite of a hostile court and treacherous friends.

The Mind of the Master.

July 5

OUR average man must not claim the privilege of vagrant genius; he must wrestle and sweat, placing, reviewing, transposing, till the way stands fair and open from Alpha to Omega—a clean, straight furrow from end to end of the field, a chain of single links which when put to the test holds.

The Cure of Souls.



July 6

THIS was what rose before his eyes, in that empty place. Within the drawers were kept the Sabbath clothes, and in this room a laddie was dressed for kirk, after a searching and remorseless scrubbing in the “but,” and here he must sit motionless till it was time to start, while Mary, giving last touches to the fire and herself, maintained a running exhortation, “Gin ye brak that collar or rumple yir hair, peety ye; the ’ll be nae peppermint-drap for you in the sermon the day.” Here also an old woman whose hands were hard with work opened a secret place in those drawers, and gave a young man whose hands were white her last penny.

“Ye ’ll be carefu’, Chairlie, an’ a ’ll try tae send ye something till ye can dae for yersel’; an’, laddie, dinna forget . . . yir Bible nor yir hame, for we expect ye tae be a credit tae ’s a’.”

Have mercy, O God!

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.

July 7

WERE earnest men rebelling against ancient dogmas because they were an integral part of Jesus' teaching, this would be a very serious matter. This would be nothing short of a deliberate attack on Jesus. If they be only endeavouring to correct the results of theological science by the actual teaching of Jesus, then surely nothing could be more hopeful. This must issue in the revival of Christianity.

The Mind of the Master.



July 8

“YE think that a’ m asking a great thing when I plead for a pickle notes to give a puir laddie a college education. I tell ye, man, a’ m honourin’ ye and givin’ ye the fairest chance ye ’ll ever hae o’ winning wealth. Gin ye store the money ye hae scrapit by mony a hard bargain, some heir ye never saw ’ill gar it flee in chambering and wantonness. Gin ye hed the heart to spend it on a lad o’ pairts like Geordie Hoo, ye wud hae twa rewards nae man could tak frae ye. Ane wud be the honest gratitude o’ a laddie whose desire for knowledge ye hed sateesfied, and the second wud be this—anither scholar in the land; and a’ m thinking with auld John Knox that ilka scholar is something added to the riches of the commonwealth.”

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.

July 9

WHAT the ideal pastor sees in every member of his congregation is not some one that will be of use to him because he is such a good worker, but a soul that is given him for twenty years by Christ, and whom he must prepare for everlasting life. *The Cure of Souls.*



July 10

WHEN Jesus' idea of Faith is accepted, then its province in human life will be finally delimited, and various frontier wars brought to an end. Painters will still give us charming pictures of Faith and Reason, but they will no longer represent Reason as a mailed knight picking his way from stone to stone, while Faith as a winged angel floats by his side. Faith and Reason will be neighbouring powers, each absolute in its own region. It is the part of Reason to verify intellectual conceptions and apply intellectual principles, and Faith must not disturb this work. It is the part of Faith to gather those hopes and feelings which lie outside the intellect, and Faith must not be hampered by Reason. When the knight comes to the edge of the cliff, he can go no farther; then Faith, like Angelico's San Michele, opens his strong wings and passes out in the lonely quest for God.

The Mind of the Master.

July 11

TAKE one sin that happens to be mine and other men's, and let the preacher confine himself, say, to pride, and it will be strange if he does not arrest and ashame me, but let him throw in a dozen other sins and I shall be unmoved. My medicine is held in too large a solution. A sermon ought to be a monograph and not an encyclopædia, an agency for pushing one article, not a general store where one can purchase anything from a button to a coffin.

The Cure of Souls.



July 12

DOCTOR DAVIDSON prayed:

“Heavenly Father, who only art the source of love and the giver of every good gift, we thank Thee for the love wherewith the soul of Thy servant clave unto this woman as Jacob unto Rachel, which many years have not quenched. Remember the faithfulness of this true heart, and disappoint not its expectation. May the tryst that was broken on earth be kept in heaven, and be pleased to give Thy . . . give Jamie a good home-coming. Amen.”

“Thank ye, doctor; ye've said what I wantit, an' . . . it wes kind o' ye tae pit in ‘Jamie,’ ” and his hand came out from the bed for a last grasp.

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.

July 13

PHILOSOPHY has been, for the most part, distinguished by its strenuous treatment of the moral problem, but has been visibly hampered by circumstances, being in the position of a Court which cannot go into the whole case. Sin may be only a defect, then philosophy can cope with the position ; but it is at least possible that sin may be a collision with the will of God, then philosophy can afford no help. Spiritual affairs are beyond its jurisdiction ; they belong to the department of Religion. Within the range of philosophy the Race has not gone astray—it has simply not arrived : humanity is not diseased—it is only poorly developed.

The Mind of the Master.



July 14

WHEN Jesus proposes to sum up the whole duty of man in Love, one is instantly charmed with the sentiment, and understands how it made the arid legalism of the scribes to blossom like the rose. How can one conquer sin ? How can one come to perfection ? How can one have fellowship with God ? How can one save the world ? And to a hundred questions of this kind Jesus has one answer : “Love the man next you.” It is the poetry of idealism ; it is quite beyond criticism as a counsel of perfection.

The Mind of the Master.

July 15

WHEN the doctor placed the precious bag beside Sir George in our solitary first next morning, he laid a cheque beside it and was about to leave.

"No, no," said the great man. "Mrs. Macfadyen and I were on the gossip last night, and I know the whole story about you and your friend."

"You have some right to call me a coward, but I'll never let you count me a mean, miserly rascal," and the cheque with Drumsheugh's painful writing fell in fifty pieces on the floor.

As the train began to move, a voice from the first called so that all in the station heard.

"Give 's another shake of your hand, MacLure; I'm proud to have met you; you are an honour to our profession. Mind the antiseptic dressings."

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.



July 16

AH, the kindly jests that have not come off in life, the gracious deeds that never were done, the reparations that were too late!

Kate Carnegie.

THERE was a day when the preacher could break out in terrifying language on his hearers for sleeping, inattention, and such like faults. People are too intelligent and well-bred now to commit such breaches of good taste: they sleep at home.

The Cure of Souls.

July 17

AS the light of the sun colours the tiniest blade of grass, so the idea in the background of the mind tinges every detail of life. We grant that a man's theology will be built on his belief, and will follow its lines to the highest pinnacle. This is a grudging concession, a limited analysis. The whole energy of a human life, however it may have been fed on the way, and whatever common wheels it may turn, arises from the spring among the hills. Belief gives the trend to politics, constitutes the rule of business, composes the atmosphere of home, and creates the horizon of the soul. It becomes the sovereign arbiter of our destinies, for character itself is the precipitate of belief.

The Mind of the Master.



July 18

“YE asked me :

“ ‘Am I a guid mother tae ye?’ and when I could dae naethin’ but hold, ye said, ‘Be sure God maun be a hantle kinder.’

“ The truth came to me as with a flicker, and I cuddled down into my bed, and fell asleep in His love as in my mother’s arms.

“ Mither,” and George lifted up his head, “that was my conversion, and, mither dear, I hae longed a’ thro’ thae college studies for the day when ma mooth wud be opened wi’ this evangel.”

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.

July 19

“YE'RE tae hae the Doctor at laist,” Mains said to Netherton — letting the luck-penny on a transaction in seed-corn stand over — “an’ a’m jidgin’ the time’s no’ been lost. He’s plainer an’ easier tae follow than he wes at the affgo. Ma word” — contemplating the exercise before the Glen — “but ye’ll aye get eneuch here and there tae cairry hame.” — Which shows what a man the Rabbi was, that on the strength of his possession a parish like Kilbogie could speak after this fashion to Drumtochty.

“He’ll hae a fair trial, Mains” — Netherton’s tone was distinctly severe — “an’ mony a trial he’s hed in his day, they say : wes’t three-an’-twenty kirks he preached in afore ye took him? But mind ye, length’s nae standard in Drumtochty; na, na, it’s no’ hoo muckle wind a man hes, but what like is the stuff that comes. It’s bushels doon bye, but it’s wecht up bye.”

Kate Carnegie.



July 20

THE Bible as it comes from the critics is more real, because it is more human ; not a book dropped down from heaven, untouched with a feeling of our infirmities, but a book wrought out through the struggles, hopes, trials, victories of the soul of man in his quest after God.

The Cure of Souls.

July 21

IN various places and on many occasions does Jesus pledge us to meet Him in this life — at the Cross, in the Sacrament, in the crises of joy and sorrow — and now once again He appoints us a meeting-place. It is the Valley of the Shadow, where, in the quietness and seclusion as in a lover's glade, He will expect us one day. Is there any spot on earth so common or so wild that it has not been transformed by love? Are there any places in our thought so beautiful as those where we kept tryst with those that were dearer than life? So Jesus, who hath such power of regeneration that He changed the accursed tree into the Cross, and made chief sinners into saints, hath put a fair face on death so that it becometh but His dark disguise as He returneth to receive us home.

The Upper Room.



July 22

JESUS wrote nothing, He said little, but He did what He said and made others do as He commanded. His religion began at once to exist; from the beginning it was a life. It is the distinction of Christianity that it goes. This is why some of us, in spite of every intellectual difficulty, must believe Jesus to be the Son of God — He has done what no other ever did, and what only God could do. He is God because He discharges a “God-function.”

The Mind of the Master.

July 23

NEW thought is almost sure to be crude and yeasty, and therefore wise and charitable deliverances can hardly be expected of young preachers, because their thought has not yet had time to ripen. It is enough if it be strong and rich; fineness and fragrance will come with age.

The Cure of Souls.



July 24

LITERATURE oscillates between extremes, and affords an instructive contradiction. As the record of human experience it must chronicle sin; as the solace of the individual, it makes a brave effort to ignore sin. You hear the moan of this calamity through all the work of Sophocles, but Aristophanes persuades you that this is the gayest of worlds, and both voices were heard in the same theatre beneath the shadow of enthroned Wisdom. Juvenal's mordant satire lays bare the ulcerous Roman life, but Catullus flings a wreath of roses over it, and they were both poets of the classical age. A French novelist, with an unholy mastery of his craft, steeps us in the horrors of a decadent society. A French critic, with the airiest grace, exclaims: "Sin, I have abolished it."

The Mind of the Master.

July 25

TEXTS I can never remember, nor, for that matter, the words of sermons; but the subject was Jesus Christ, and before he had spoken five minutes I was convinced, who am outside dogmas and churches, that Christ was present. The preacher faded from before one's eyes, and there rose the figure of the Nazarene, best lover of every human soul, with a face of tender patience such as Sarto gave the Master in the Church of the Annunziata, and stretching out His hands to old folk and little children as He did, before His death, in Galilee. His voice might be heard any moment, as I have imagined it in my lonely hours by the winter fire or on the solitary hills—soft, low, and sweet, penetrating like music to the secret of the heart, "Come unto Me . . . and I will give you rest."

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.



July 26

NO one can ignore this constant and radiant sense of the Divine Fatherhood in the life of Jesus. It must be a suggestive fact to an unbeliever, for it will be admitted on every hand that Jesus knew more about Religion than any man that has ever lived. It ought to be an absolute conclusion to a believer, since he holds that Jesus is Himself Very God of Very God.

The Mind of the Master.

July 27

“‘ A’ KEN a’ m’ deein’,’ a’ said, ‘ an’ a’ m’ no’ feared, but a’ canna thole the thocht o’ slippin’ awa in an hospital; it wud hae been different at hame.’

“‘ Ye ’ll no’ want a hame here, Lily’: it wes braid Scotch noo, an’ it never soonded sae sweet ; an’, Jamie ” — here the whisper was so low, Jamie had to bend his head — “ a’ saw the tears in his een.”

“ Rest a wee, Lily ; a’ m’ followin’. Sae he took ye tae his ain hoose an’ pit ye in the best room, an’ they ’ve waitit on ye as if ye were his ain dochter. . . . Ye dinna need tae speak ; a’ wudna say but Sir Andra micht be a Christian o’ the auld kind — a’ mean, ‘ I was a stranger, and ye took Me in.’ ”

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.



July 28

ONE reason why many masterly sermons fail is that they have never had the benefit of this process ; therefore they are clear, interesting, eloquent, but helpless. They do not make way, and lay hold of hearers, because they have never conquered the speaker. He has not been horrified at this sin, has not felt this trial, has not seen this Christ during the week through the sympathy of the soul.

The Cure of Souls.

July 29

HOW was the kingdom to impress itself upon the world and change the colour of human life? As Jesus did Himself, and after no other fashion. Of all conquerors He has had the highest ambition, and above them all He has seen His desire. He has dared to demand men's hearts as well as their lives and has won them — how? By coercion? by stratagem? by cleverness? by splendour? By none of those means that have been used by rulers, — by the Cross. The Cross meant the last devotion to humanity; it was the pledge of the most uncomplaining and effectual ministry. When you inquire the resources of the Kingdom of Heaven, behold the Cross. They are faith and love. Its soldiers are the humble, the meek, the gentle, the peaceful. *The Mind of the Master.*



July 30

IT was a low-roofed room, with a box bed and some pieces of humble furniture, fit only for a labouring man. But the choice treasures of Greece and Rome lay on the table, and on a shelf beside the bed College prizes and medals, while everywhere were the roses he loved. His peasant mother stood beside the body of her scholar son, whose hopes and thoughts she had shared, and through the window came the bleating of distant sheep. It was the idyll of Scottish University life. *Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.*

July 31

NO one sent for MacLure save in great straits, and the sight of him put courage in sinking hearts. But this was not by the grace of his appearance, or the advantage of a good bedside manner. A tall, gaunt, loosely made man, without an ounce of superfluous flesh on his body, his face burned a dark brick colour by constant exposure to the weather, red hair and beard turning grey, honest blue eyes that looked you ever in the face, huge hands with wrist bones like the shank of a ham, and a voice that hurled his salutations across two fields, he suggested the moor rather than the drawing-room. But what a clever hand it was in an operation, as delicate as a woman's, and what a kindly voice it was in the humble room where the shepherd's wife was weeping by her man's bedside.

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.

August

A DISPLENISHING SALE

DRUMTOCHTY, hoeing the turnips for the second time on a glorious day in early August, saw the Kildrummie auctioneer go up the left side of the Glen and down the right like one charged with high affairs. It was understood that Jock Constable could ride anything in the shape of a horse, and that afternoon he had got ten miles an hour out of an animal which had been down times without number, and whose roaring could be heard from afar. Jock was in such haste that he only smacked his lips as he passed our public-house, and waved his hand when Hillocks shouted, "Hoo's a' wi' ye?" from a neighbouring field. But he dismounted whenever he saw a shapely gate-post, and spent five minutes at the outer precincts of the two churches.

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.

August 1

THERE are churches which depreciate the service, and churches which depreciate the sermon, and both err, because sermon and service are not rivals but auxiliaries, the service spiritualising and softening the heart for the message of God, and the Evangel being the answer to the praise and prayer.

The Cure of Souls.



August 2

TOWNSPEOPLE are so clever, and know so much, that it is only just something should be hidden from their sight, and it is quite certain that they do not understand the irresistible and endless fascination of the country. They love to visit us in early autumn, and are vastly charmed with the honeysuckle in the hedges, and the corn turning yellow, and the rivers singing in the sunlight, and the purple on the hill-side. It is then that the dweller in cities resolves to retire, as soon as may be, from dust and crowds and turmoil and hurry, to some cottage where the scent of roses comes in at the open window, and one is wakened of a morning by the birds singing in the ivy. When the corn is gathered into the stack-yard, and the leaves fall on the road, and the air has a touch of frost, and the evenings draw in, then the townsman begins to shiver and bethink him of his home.

Kate Carnegie.

August 3

JEWISH piety has laid the world under a hopeless debt by imagining the austere holiness of God, and has doubled the obligation by adding His tenderness. It was an achievement to carve the white marble; a greater to make it live and glow. The saints of Israel touched their highest when they infused the idea of the Divine spirituality with passion, and brought it to pass that the Holy One of Israel is the kindest deity that has ever entered the heart of man. There was no human emotion they did not assign to God; no relationship they did not use as the illustration of His love; no appeal of affection they did not place in His lips; no sorrow of which they did not make Him partaker.

The Mind of the Master.



August 4

MARGET lifted Plato, and it seemed to me that day as if the dignity of our Lady of Sorrows had fallen upon her.

“ This is the buik George chose for you, Maister Maclean, for he aye said to me ye hed been a prophet and shown him mony deep things.”

The tears sprang to the Celt’s eyes.

“ It wass like him to make all other men better than himself,” with the soft, sad Highland accent; “ and a proud woman you are to hef been his mother.” *Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.*

August 5

ONE has heard able and pious sermons which might as well have been preached in Mars, for any relation they had to our life and environment. They suggested the address a disembodied spirit might give to his brethren in the intermediate state, where it is alleged we shall exist without physical correspondence. This detached sermon is the only credible evidence for such an unimaginable state, but otherwise it does not appear effective.

The Cure of Souls.



August 6

JESUS has changed ethics from a crystal that can only grow by accretion into a living plant that flowers in its season. He exposed the negative principle of morals in His empty house swept and garnished ; He vindicated the positive principle in His house held by a strong man armed. The individualism of selfishness is the disintegrating force which has cursed this world, segregating the individual and rending society to pieces. The altruism of Love is the consolidating force which will save the world, reconciling every man to his fellows and recreating society. When Jesus makes Love the basis of social life, He does not need to condescend to details ; He has established unity.

The Mind of the Master.

August 7

IF God give us success, then to the feet of Jesus let our sheaves be carried ; if it be His will we should fail, to the same dear Lord let us flee, Who knows what it is to see His life fall into the ground and disappear. From His life let us learn to preach ; from His example let us learn to serve ; in His communion let us find our strength, comfort, peace, Whom not having seen we love, to Whom we shall one day render our account.

The Cure of Souls.



August 8

THE Doctor gave the cup to the General, who passed it to Kate, and from her it went to Weelum MacLure, and another cup he gave to Hay, whom he had known from a child, and he handed it to Marget Howe, and she to Whinnie, her man ; and so the two cups passed down from husband to wife, from wife to daughter, from daughter to servant, from lord to tenant, till all had shown forth the Lord's death in common fellowship and love as becometh Christian folk. In the solemn silence the sunshine fell on the faces of the communicants, and the singing of the birds came in through the open door with the scent of flowers and ripe corn.

Kate Carnegie.

August 9

IT follows upon Jesus' suggestion of the next life,—the continuation of the present on a higher level,—that it will be itself a continual progress, and Jesus gives us frequent hints of this law. When He referred to the many mansions in His Father's house, He may have been intending rooms—places where those who had been associated together on earth may be gathered together; but He may be rather intending stations—stages in that long ascent of life that shall extend through the ages of ages.

The Mind of the Master.



August 10

SO they sat down together beside the brier bush, and after one glance at Marget's face the minister opened his heart, and told her the great controversy with Lachlan.

Marget lifted her head as one who had heard of some brave deed, and there was a ring in her voice.

"It maks me prood before God that there are twa men in Drumtochty who follow their conscience as king, and coont truth dearer than their ain freends. It's peetifu' when God's bairns fecht through greed and envy, but it's hertsome when they are wullin' tae wrestle aboot the Evangel, for surely the end o' it a' maun be peace."

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.

August 11

WHAT we have chiefly to learn for the work of the Holy Ministry, in our day, is not how to criticise, nor how to read, nor how to speak, nor how to organise, but how to meditate, in order that present-day sermons may add to their brightness and interest the greater qualities of the past, depth of experience, and an atmosphere of peace.

The Cure of Souls.



August 12

SUDDENLY they came out from the shade into a narrow lane of light, where some one of the former time, with an eye and a soul, had cleared a passage among the trees, so that one standing at the inner end and looking outwards could see the whole Glen, while the outstretched branches of the beeches shaded his eyes. Morning in the summer-time about five o'clock was a favourable hour, because one might see the last mists lift and the sun light up the face of Ben Urtach ; and evening-tide was better, because the Glen showed wonderfully tender in the soft light, and the Grampians were covered with glory. But it was best to take your first view towards noon, for then you could trace the Tochty upwards as it appeared and reappeared, till it was lost in woods at the foot of Glen Urtach, with every spot of interest on either side.

Kate Carnegie.

August 13

"**H**IS hert wes juist ower big, that wes the maitter wi' Jamie, an' he hoddit [hid] his feelings for fear o' makin' a fule o' himsel' afore the pairish.

"Sall, he wesna verra parteeklar what he said gin ye hed him in a corner. He nursit the bit lassie that lived wi' Mary Robertson for a hale day when she wes deein' o' diphtery, an' threipit tae me that he hed juist gien a cry in passin'; an' when Lily Grant dee'd in London, he gied oot that her mistress hed paid for bringin' the corpse tae Drumtochty kirkyaird. He cud lee near as weel as Milton, but it wes aye tae cover his ain gudeness.

"A' coontit Weelum MacLure an' Jamie Soutar the warmest herts in the Glen, an' Jamie's never been the same sin' . . . we lost Weelum. The kirkyaird's no' worth comin' tae noo that Jamie's awa."

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.



August 14

ONE may also view with apprehension the habit of popularising theology to the point of vulgarity, and wince when the resurrection of our Lord is discussed in drawing-rooms, and the miraculous decided between the soup and the fish. This is from the cloister to the market-place with a vengeance, and thoughtful people must have anxieties.

The Cure of Souls.

August 15

MOMENTS there are when the sailors of the deep envy those that sail in the smooth sheltered waters because they have not been driven to and fro on stormy seas and been in danger of the jagged rocks. Other moments, the sons of tribulation pity those unfortunates who have never seen the great billows lie down as a dog chidden by his master and God turn the storm into a calm. One half of the Bible is a closed book to them that sit at ease, because only a pierced hand can open the pages.



The Upper Room.

August 16

"MY DEAR LASSIE,—Ye ken that I wes aye yir freend, and I am writing this tae say that yir father luves ye mair than ever, and is wearing oot his hert for the sicht o' yir face. Come back, or he 'll dee thro' want o' his bairn. The glen is bright and bonny noo, for the purple heather is on the hills, and doon below the gowden corn, wi' bluebell and poppy flowers between. Naebody 'ill ask ye where ye 've been, or onything else ; there 's no a bairn in the place that 's no wearying tae see ye ; and, Flora, lassie, if there will be sic gledness in oor wee glen when ye come hame, what think ye o' the joy in the Father's Hoose ? Start the verra meenit that ye get this letter; yir father bids ye come, and I 'm writing this in place o' yir mother.

MARGRET HOWE."

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.

August 17

HE stands before his people now in the supreme moment of his life, and a sense of the solemnity of his duty overcomes him, so that they see him hesitate between the text and the sermon. Let them pray with one accord that upon this frail brother man, on whom God has laid such a work, the Holy Ghost may descend, and the same Spirit make tender their hearts within them.

The Cure of Souls.



August 18

“A’M expeckin’ tae hear John’s on the mend masel’,” said David, manfully, and he set himself to fortify his wife with Saunders’s case and the doctor’s prayer, till she lifted her head again and watched.

A summer wind passed over the pines, the wood-pigeons cooed above their heads, rabbits ran out and in beside them, the burn below made a pleasant sound, and a sense of the Divine Love descended on their hearts.

“The Almighty,” whispered Meg, “’ill surely no’ tak awa oor only bairn . . . an’ him dune sae weel . . . an’ sae gude a son . . . A’ wes coontin’ on him comin’ hame next year . . . an’ seein’ him aince mair . . . afore a’ dee’d.”

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.

August 19

WHEN one passes from the Gospels to the Psalms he is struck by the absence of Father. When one returns he is struck by its presence. The Psalmist never said the word ; Jesus never said anything else. With Jesus, God and Father were identical. Fatherhood was not a side of Deity ; it was the centre. God might be a King and Judge ; He was first of all, and last of all, and through all, Father. In Fatherhood every other relation of God must be harmonised and find its sphere. Short of His Fatherhood you cannot stop in the ascent of God. Under Fatherhood is gathered every other revelation.

The Mind of the Master.



August 20

BENEATH the honeysuckle at his garden gate a woman was waiting.

" My name is Marget Howe, and I'm the wife of William Howe of Whinnie Knowe. My only son wes preparin' for the ministry, but God wanted him nearly a year syne. When ye preached the Evangel o' Jesus the day I heard his voice, and I loved you. Ye hev nae mither on earth, I hear, and I hae nae son, and I wantit tae say that if ye ever wish tae speak to ony woman as ye wud tae yir mither, come tae Whinnie Knowe, an' I'll coont it ane of the Lord's consolations."

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.

August 21

THEY stood in silence to receive the blessing of the place ; for surely never is the soul so open to the voice of nature as by the side of running water and in the heart of a wood. The fretted sunlight made shifting figures of brightness on the ground ; above, the innumerable leaves rustled and whispered ; a squirrel darted along a branch and watched the intruders with bright, curious eyes ; the rooks cawed from the distance ; the pigeons cooed in sweet, sad cadence close at hand. They sat down on the bare roots at their feet and yielded themselves to the genius of the forest — the god who will receive the heart torn and distracted by the fierce haste and unfinished labours and vain ambitions of life, and will lay its fever to rest and encompass it with the quietness of eternity.

Kate Carnegie.



August 22

WHAT is wanted above everything to-day is positive preaching, by men who believe with all their mind and heart in Jesus Christ. If a man has any doubt about Christ he must on no account be His minister ; and if one in the ministry be afflicted from time to time by failures of faith, let him consume his own smoke and keep a brave face in the pulpit.

The Cure of Souls.

August 23

WHEN Jesus judges by type, our Christ approximation, or our Christ alienation, one is struck by His absolute fairness. We are estimated not by what we have done but by what we desire to be. With Jesus the purpose of the soul is as the soul's achievement, and He will not be disappointed. If one surrender himself to Jesus, and is crucified on His cross, there is no sin he will not overcome, no service he will not render, no virtue to which he will not attain. He has made a good beginning, he has a long time. If one refuse the appeal of Jesus, and cling to his lower self, there is no degradation to which he may not descend. He has made a bad beginning, and he also has a long time. Both have eternity.

The Mind of the Master.



August 24

WHEN Jean was comforted Burnbrae gathered his household together in the kitchen, and he chose the portion from the tenth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel —

“ Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven.”

As Burnbrae read the last words he lifted up his head, and it seemed even unto the serving-girls as if he had received a crown.

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.

August 25

"IT wass a beautiful night in London, but I will be thinking that there iss no living person caring whether I die or live, and I wass considering how I could die, for there is nothing so hopeless as to hef no friend in a great city. It iss often that I hef been alone on the moor, and no man within miles, but I wass never lonely, oh no, I had plenty of good company. I would sit down beside a burn, and the trout will swim out from below a stone, and the cattle will come to drink, and the muirfowl will be crying to each other, and the sheep will be bleating, oh yes, and there are the bees all round, and a string of wild ducks above your head. It iss a busy place a moor, and a safe place too, for there is not one of the animals will hurt you. No, the big highlanders will only look at you and go away to their pasture."

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.



August 26

LUCIDITY is never to be confounded with simplicity: the former is a quality of style, the latter of thought, and it sometimes happens that what is childish in idea may be unintelligible in expression, while what is profound in idea may be plain to a child.

The Cure of Souls.

August 27

THERE are three steps in the Santa Scala which the Race is slowly and painfully ascending; barbarism where men cultivate the body, civilisation where they cultivate the intellect, holiness where they cultivate the soul. There is for the whole Race, for each nation, for every individual, the age of Homer, the age of Socrates, the age of Jesus. Beyond the age of Jesus nothing can be desired or imagined, for it runs on those lofty table-lands where the soul lives with God.

The Mind of the Master.



August 28

"WELL, Burnbrae, I never thought you would have left me for a matter of kirks. Could you not have stretched a point for auld lang syne?" and Kilspindie looked hard at the old man.

"Ma Lord, there's naething a' wudna hae dune to stay in Burnbrae but this ae thing. Ye hae been a gude landlord tae me, as the auld Earl wes tae ma father, an' it 'ill never be the same tae me again on anither estate; but ye maunna ask me tae gang back on ma conscience." The tears came to Burnbrae's eyes, and he rose to his feet. "A' thocht," he said, "when yir message cam, that maybe ye hed anither mind than yir factor, and wud send me back tae Jean wi' guid news in ma mooth."

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.

August 29

ONE can hardly imagine a greater sin against light within the Church than any indifference or enmity towards theology, or a more flagrant outrage against the idea of a University than the omission or exclusion of one science alone, and that the queen of all, and the one in which all others cohere and are crowned.

The Cure of Souls.



August 30

JESUS did not affect such humility, nor make such admissions. He did not obliterate or minimise Himself ; He emphasised and asserted Himself. "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time," opens one paragraph after another of Jesus' great sermon, and then follows, "But I say unto you." Jesus brushes aside the ancients as if they had never been. His disciples were not to own any authority beside Him ; He was to be absolute, with Apostles and Prophets as His witnesses and interpreters, never His equals. His words are ushered in with the solemn formula, "Verily, verily ;" they fall on the inner ear like the stroke of a bell; they are independent of argument. It is ever "I," and one's soul answers with reverence. For this "I" that sounds from every sentence of the teaching of Jesus is not egotism ; it is Deity.

The Mind of the Master.

August 31

IT was the hour before daybreak, and Drum-sheugh wandered through fields he had trodden since childhood. The cattle lay sleeping in the pastures: their shadowy forms, with a patch of whiteness here and there, having a weird suggestion of death. He heard the burn running over the stones; fifty years ago he had made a dam that lasted till winter. The hooting of an owl made him start; one had frightened him as a boy so that he ran home to his mother—she died thirty years ago. The smell of ripe corn filled the air; it would soon be cut and garnered. He could see the dim outlines of his house, all dark and cold; no one he loved was beneath the roof. The lighted window in Saunders' cottage told where a man hung between life and death, but love was in that home. The futility of life arose before this lonely man, and overcame his heart with an indescribable sadness. What a vanity was all human labour, what a mystery all human life!

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.

September

NO one can desire a sweeter walk than through a Scottish pine wood in late September, where you breathe the healing resinous air, and the ground is crisp and springy beneath your feet, and gentle animals dart away on every side, and here and there you come on an open space with a pool, and a brake of gorse. Many a time on market days Flora had gone singing through these woods, plucking a posy of wild flowers and finding a mirror in every pool, as young girls will; but now she trembled and was afraid. The rustling of the trees in the darkness, the hooting of an owl, the awful purity of the moonlight in the glades, the cold sheen of the water, were to her troubled conscience omens of judgment. Had it not been for the kindness of Peter Bruce, which was a pledge of human forgiveness, there would have been no heart in her to dare that wood, and it was with a sob of relief she escaped from the shadow and looked upon the old glen once more, bathed from end to end in the light of the harvest moon.

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.

September 1

A LAS! his wife goes off guard, and a picturesque foreigner from the East takes possession of the study. The minister, courteous as one ought to be to distant strangers, lays himself out to extricate the visitor's meaning, and after an hour's patient exploration discovers that his caller comes from an unknown place, that he represents himself, that he wishes to build something, that he is determined to preach in the minister's church to-morrow for a collection.

The Cure of Souls.



September 2

“‘WUD ye like me tae read something?’ begins Milton again. ‘A’ve a fine tract here, “A Sandy Foundation;” it’s verra searchin’ an’ rousin’,’ an’ he pits on his glasses.

“‘Thank ye,’ says Jamie, ‘but thae tracts are ower deep for a simple man like masel’; the Bible dis for me graund. A’ve a favourite passage; noo, if ye didna mind readin’ t’, it wud be a comfort.

“‘Turn tae the 23rd o’ Matthew, an’ it ’ill dae fine gin ye begin at the 13th verse, “Woe unto ye, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites,”’ an’ as sure as a ’m lookin’ at ye, Drumsheugh, Jamie gar’d Milton feenish the chapter, an’ ilka time heepocrites wud come he wud say tae himsel’, ‘Maist comfortin’,’ till a’ hed tae gae ootside.’”

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.

September 3

“FORGIVE your enemies,” said Jesus; “help the miserable, restore the fallen, set the captive free. Love as I have loved, and you will succeed.” Amazing simplicity! amazing originality! Hitherto kingdoms had stood on the principle of selfishness — grasp and keep. This kingdom was to rest on sacrifice — suffer and serve. Amazing hope, that anything so weak, so helpless, could regenerate the masterful world! But Jesus has not been put to shame: His plan has not failed. There are many empires on the face of the earth to-day, but none so dominant as the kingdom of God.

The Mind of the Master.



September 4

A TURN of the path brought her within sight of the cottage, and her heart came into her mouth, for the kitchen window was a blaze of light. One moment she feared Lachlan might be ill, but in the next she understood, and in the greatness of her joy she ran the rest of the way. When she reached the door, her strength had departed, and she was not able to knock. But there was no need, for the dogs, who never forget nor cast off, were bidding her welcome with short joyous yelps of delight, and she could hear her father feeling for the latch, which for once could not be found, and saying nothing but “Flora, Flora.” *Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.*

September 5

WHEN the new Free Kirk minister was settled in Drumtochty, Jamie told him the story on the road one day and put him to the test.

"What think ye, sir, becam o' Posty on the ither side?" and Jamie fixed his eyes on Carmichael.

The minister's face grew still whiter.

"Did you ever read what shall be done to any man that hurts one of God's bairns?"

"Fine," answered Jamie, with relish, "a millstane aboot his neck, an' intae the depths o' the sea."

"Then, it seems to me that it must be well with Posty, who went into the depths and brought a bairn up at the cost of his life," — and Carmichael added softly, "whose angel doth continually behold the face of the Father."

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.



September 6

THERE is a sense in which preaching must be the same in all ages, dealing as it does with the everlasting Evangel of the Divine Love. There is a sense in which preaching must differ with every age, addressed as it ought to be to the changing conditions of life and thought. Christ is not one, but many; and therein He has proved Himself the Son of Man and the Saviour of the world.

The Cure of Souls.

September 7

THE manse garden lies toward the west, and as the minister paced its little square of turf, sheltered by fir hedges, the sun was going down behind the Grampians. Black massy clouds had begun to gather in the evening, and threatened to obscure the sunset, which was the finest sight a Drumtochty man was ever likely to see, and a means of grace to every sensible heart in the glen. But the sun had beat back the clouds on either side, and shot them through with glory, and now between piled billows of light he went along a shining pathway into the Gates of the West.

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.



September 8

WHEN a prophet's inner vision had been cleansed by the last agony of pain, he dares to describe the Eternal as a fond mother who holds Ephraim by the hands, teaching him to go ; who is outraged by his sin, and yet cannot bear that Israel should perish : as a Husband who has offered a rejected love, and still pleads ; who is stained by a wife's unfaithfulness, and pursues an adulteress with entreaties. One cannot lay his hand on the body of prophetical Scripture without feeling the beat of the Divine heart : one can detect in its most distant member the warmth of the Divine love.

The Mind of the Master.

September 9

IT is not the man who selects the text — that is not the inwardness of the fact — it is the text which selects the man. As the minister was busy with study, or as he sat by the bedside of the sick, or as he walked the crowded street, or as he wandered over the purple heather, or — such things have happened, the grace of God being sovereign — as he endured in a Church Court, the truth, clad in a text, which is the more or less perfect dress of the Spirit, suddenly appeared and claimed his acquaintance.

The Cure of Souls.



September 10

“ **N**A, na, Burnbrae, we’re no’ tae lose ye yet ; ye’ll hae yir kirk and yir fairm in spite o’ a’ the factors in Perthshire, but a’ m expeckin’ a fecht.”

“ Thank ye, Drumsheugh, thank ye kindly ; and wull ye tell Doctor Davidson that he hesna lived forty years in the Glen for naethin’ ?

“ We said this mornin’ that he wud scorn tae fill his kirk with renegades, and sae wud ye a’, but a’ wesna prepared for sic feelin’.

“ There’s ae thing maks me prood o’ the Glen : nae man, Auld or Free, hes bidden me pit ma fairm afore ma kirk, but a’ body expecks me tae obey ma conscience.”

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.

September 11

THE principle of vicarious sacrifice, for instance — that one person should get good from another's sufferings, — may be proved to be true by texts of Holy Scripture, and it may also be shown to be absurd by argument, but it may be placed beyond criticism by reference to a mother, through whose sufferings and self-denial the child lives and comes to strength.

The Cure of Souls.



September 12

"**I**T 's nae use," he cried, "he 's first in the Humanity oot o' a hundred and seeenty lads, first o' them a', and he 's first in the Greek too ; the like o' this is hardly known, and it has na been seen in Drumtochty since there was a schule. That 's the word he 's sent, and he bade me tell his mother without delay, and I am here as fast as my old feet could carry me."

I glanced round, although I did not myself see very clearly.

Marget was silent for the space of five seconds ; she was a good woman, and I knew that better afterwards. She took the Dominie's hand, and said to him, "Under God this was your doing, Maister Jamieson, and for your reward ye 'ill get naither silver nor gold, but ye hae a mither's gratitude."

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.

September 13

WE are amused by the societies which are the custodians of Ruskin and Browning, but none can be indifferent to the manipulation of Jesus' words. If Jesus' delicate poetry be reduced to prose, and the fair, carved work of His parables be used for the building of prisons, and His lovely portrait of God be "restored" with grotesque colouring, and His lucid principles of life be twisted into harassing regulations, then Jesus has been much wronged, and the world has suffered irreparable loss.

The Mind of the Master.



September 14

ONE thing the pastor cannot do : criticise his people or make distinctions among them. Others, with no shepherd heart, may miss the hidden goodness ; he searches for it as for fine gold. Others may judge people for faults and sins ; he takes them for his own. Others may make people's foibles the subject of their raillery ; the pastor cannot because he loves. Does this interest on the part of one not related by blood or long friendship seem an impertinence ? It ought to be pardoned, for it is the only one of the kind that is likely to be offered. Is it a sentiment ? Assuredly, the same sublime devotion which has made Jesus the Good Shepherd of the soul.

The Cure of Souls.

September 15

THE spirit of our day is so resentful of traditionalism as to be even impatient of theology, which is foolish ; and to threaten faith, which would be ruin. No one, however, need be alarmed, for there is good reason to believe that the end will be the toleration of a noble science and the re-establishment of faith. When workmen come with pickaxe and shovel, it is either to destroy or to discover, and the aim of present thought is discovery.

The Mind of the Master.



September 16

THE religious nomad, who changes his church every three years, who assures each minister on arrival that in his poor judgment he is the most brilliant preacher in the city, who begins by attending every service in the week, and can hardly be kept out of the mothers' meeting, who regrets that he cannot give to the funds as his means have long been consecrated in a special direction — whose wife calls towards the end of the three years to explain that she feels it her duty to go with her husband, who is receiving much benefit from a course of lectures on the Vials of the Revelation, given by the new minister of a neighbouring church.

The Cure of Souls.

September 17

"FOWER o's," resumed MacLure; "an' Sandie got a Russian bayonet through his breist fechtin' ae snawy nicht in the trenches, an' puir Squinty dee'd oot in Ameriky wearyin' for the Glen, an' wishin' he cud be buried in Drumtochty kirkyaird. Fine laddies baith, an' that 's twa o' the fower truants that hae gane hame. You an' me, Drum, hed the farthest road tae traivel that nicht, an' we 're the laist again. The sun 's settin' for us tae ; we 've hed a gude lang day, and ye 'll hae a whilie aifter me, but we maun follow the ither twa."

"Ye 're richt, Weelum, aboot the end o't, whichever gangs first," said Drumsheugh.

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.



September 18

WE have often hoped for reconciliation between science and religion, where none is needed ; often hoped for reconciliation between reason and faith, where none is needed, since each works in a different department of human life ; but there is a reconciliation needed for which all devout and reverent men yearn, and it is the reconciliation between dogma and religion. They are not antagonistic, and if they have ever been forced into lamentable rivalry, they will make a covenant of peace in the love of the Father and of Jesus Christ His son.

The Cure of Souls.

September 19

COULD Jesus who gave the Sermon on the Mount and the discourse of the upper room, who satisfied St. John and loosed St. Mary Magdalene from her sin, and who remains the unapproachable ideal of perfection, be annihilated by a few nails and the thrust of a Roman spear? . . . The certainty of Jesus' Resurrection does not rest in the last issue on His isolated appearances during the forty days; it rests on His Life for thirty-three years. His Life was beyond the reach of death; it was Ageless Life.

The Mind of the Master.



September 20

IF the sermon be in its degree a prophetic utterance, then it must be in its essence a mystery. What the prophet tells forth he must first be told, but how God uncovers His servant's ear and whispers His message no one can explain. The true preacher is distinguished by a certain demonic influence—a divine passion—which breathes through the thought, the words, the very manner, which cannot be described, which is felt in the marrow of the bones. This is the only infallible sign of a prophet; it is the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and about such secret and sacred things it becometh one to be silent and to fear.

The Cure of Souls.

September 21

"WHEN I was your verra age I had a cruel trial, and ma heart was turned frae faith. The classics hae been my bible, though I said naethin' to ony man against Christ. He aye seemed beyond man, and noo the veesion o' Him has come to me in this gairden. Laddie, ye hae dune far mair for me than I ever did for you. Wull ye mak a prayer for yirauld dominie afore we part?"

There was a thrush singing in the birches and a sound of bees in the air, when George prayed in a low, soft voice, with a little break in it.

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.



September 22

JESUS fused His disciples into one body, and, by this act alone, separated Himself from the method of philosophy. Philosophy is content with an audience ; Jesus demands a society. Philosophy teaches men to think ; Jesus moves them to do. Philosophy can do no more because it has no centre of unity : the kingdom of God is richer, for there is Jesus. Socrates obliterated himself ; Jesus asserted Himself, and united His followers to each other by binding them to Himself. Loyalty to Jesus was to be the spinal cord to the new body, and the sacraments were to be the signs of the new spirit.

The Mind of the Master.

September 23

WHAT is wanting, and what cannot be wanted, is the sense of the unseen and eternal—of the everlasting love of God, the atoning sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, the unspeakable value of a single soul, the infinite pathos of human life, the tenderness of the Holy Ghost, and the graciousness of the Evangel. Bathed in such springs of profound emotion, no man will be able to preach without tears, which will be all the more affecting if they be in the heart rather than in the eyes. *The Cure of Souls.*



September 24

PHYSICAL death Jesus refused to recognise ; it was an incident in the history of Life. Death was a calamity of the soul, and a living soul was invulnerable. “I am the Resurrection and the Life : he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die.” It was a brave struggle for reality, and liberated the first disciples from the bondage of the physical ; but the atmosphere is too rare for His modern disciples, who, for the most part, speak exactly as if they were Pagans in the Street of Tombs at Athens, instead of Christians who had sat at Jesus’ feet.

The Mind of the Master.

September 25

“O H, I ken weel that George is gaein’ to leave us ; but it’s no because the Almighty is jealous o’ him or me, no likely. It cam’ to me last nicht that He needs my laddie for some grand wark in the ither world, and that’s hoo George has his bukes brocht oot tae the garden and studies a’ the day. He wants to be ready for his kingdom, just as he trachiled in the bit schule o’ Drumtochty for Edinbro’. I hoped he wud hae been a minister o’ Christ’s Gospel here, but he ’ill be judge over many cities yonder.”

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.



September 26

THERE are times when one wishes he had never read the New Testament Scriptures — that he might some day open St. Luke’s Gospel, and the most beautiful book in the world might come upon his soul like sunrise. It is a doubtful fortune to be born in Athens and every day to see the Parthenon against the violet sky : better to make a single pilgrimage and carry for ever the vision of beauty in your heart. Devout Christians must be haunted by the fear that Jesus’ sublime words may have lost their heavenliness through our familiarity, or that they may have been overlaid by our conventional interpretations.

The Mind of the Master.

September 27

A MONG all the houses in a Scottish parish the homeliest and kindliest is the manse, for to its door some time in the year comes every inhabitant, from the laird to the cottar-woman. Within the familiar and old-fashioned study, where the minister's chair and writing-table could not be changed without discomposing the parish, and where there are fixed degrees of station, so that the laird has his chair and the servant lass hers, the minister receives and does his best for all the folk committed to his charge.

Kate Carnegie.



September 28

WE ought to discern the real strength of Christianity and revive the ancient passion for Jesus. It is the distinction of our religion: it is the guarantee of its triumph. Faith may languish; creeds may be changed; churches may be dissolved; society may be shattered. But one cannot imagine the time when Jesus will not be the fair image of perfection, or the circumstances wherein He will not be loved. He can never be superseded; he can never be exceeded. Religions will come and go, the passing shapes of an eternal instinct, but Jesus will remain the standard of the conscience and the satisfaction of the heart, whom all men seek, in whom all men will yet meet.

The Mind of the Master.

September 29

HE can understand truth whose mind has been illuminated by the Spirit of God and his heart cleansed by the Cross of Christ. It is good to use all the means of learning with diligence, but best to live in fellowship with Jesus, for he only who comes forth from the secret place of God will carry with him the Living Word and the Divine Unction.

The Cure of Souls.



September 30

THEY talked of many things at tea, with joy running over Drumsheugh's heart ; and then spoke of Geordie all the way across the moor, on which the moon was shining. They parted at the edge, where Marget could see the lights of home, and Drumsheugh caught the sorrow of her face for him that had to go back alone to an empty house.

"Dinna peety me, Marget ; a 've hed ma reward, an' a 'm mair than content."

On reaching home he opened the family Bible at a place that was marked, and this was what he read to himself : "They which shall be accounted worthy . . . neither marry nor are given in marriage . . . but are as the angels of God in heaven."

The Days of Auld Lang Sync.

October

JESUS found a multitude of individuals and created a spiritual kingdom. The advance from a congeries of individuals to an organised society is marked by four milestones. First, we are simply conscious of other men and accept the fact of their existence; we realise our mutual dependence and come to a working agreement. This is the infancy of the Race, and conscience is not yet awake. Then we discover that there are certain things one must not do to his neighbour, and certain services one may expect from his neighbour, that to injure the next man is misery and to help him is happiness. This is the childhood of the Race, and conscience now asserts itself. Afterwards we begin to review the situation and to collect our various duties: we arrange them under heads and state them in black and white. This is the youth of the Race, and reason is now in action. Finally, we take up our list of black and white rules and try to settle their connection. Is it not possible to trace them all to one root and comprehend them in one act? What a light to conscience, a relief to reason, a joy to the heart! This is the mature manhood of the Race, and the heart is now in evidence. From an instinct to duties, from duties to rules, and now from rules to Law. State that Law, and the Race becomes one society.

The Mind of the Master.

October 1

HE had taken a high place at the University, and won a good degree, and I 've heard the Doctor say that he had a career before him. But something happened in his life, and Domsie buried himself among the woods with the bairns of Drumtochty. No one knew the story, but after he died I found a locket on his breast, with a proud, beautiful face within, and I have fancied it was a tragedy. It may have been in substitution that he gave all his love to the children, and nearly all his money too, helping lads to college, and affording an inexhaustible store of peppermints for the little ones.

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.



October 2

WITH moderns, Deity and virtue are synonymous; with ancients, deities and vice were synonymous. Upon two hills only was the Divine raised above the

“Howling senses’ ebb and flow.”

One was the Acropolis where the golden shaft in Athene’s hand guided the mariner passing Salamis. The other was the Holy Hill where Jehovah remained the refuge of every righteous man. But the advantage lay with the Jew. The wisdom of Athens was seated in reason, and did not affect life: the wisdom of Jerusalem was seated in conscience, and created conduct.

The Mind of the Master.

October 3

ORIGINALITY in literature is called discovery in science, and the lonely supremacy of Jesus rests not on what He said, but on what He did. Jesus is absolute Master in the sphere of religion, which is a science dealing not with intellectual conceptions, but with spiritual facts. His ideas are not words, they are laws; they are not thoughts, they are forces. He did not suggest, He asserted what He had seen by direct vision. He did not propose, He commanded as one who knew there was no other way.

The Mind of the Master.



October 4

LET no man think lightly of the village church and its faithful pastor.

Where would city Christianity be without the men and women of strong, stable character that are added from the country? Who made their character? This man who is unheard of, who is too often badgered about raising money, who has the lowest stipend, who goes home feeling himself a burden on the Church. Let him lift up his head. His is lasting work, for he has wrought in imperishable material — not in silver or gold, but in the souls of men. His Master knoweth: his reward remaineth.

The Cure of Souls.

October 5

FOR the moment the heroism of the deed had carried her away, but as she went home the pity of it all came over her. For the best part of his life had this man been toiling and suffering, all that another might have comfort, and all this travail without the recompense of love. What patience, humility, tenderness, sacrifice lay in unsuspected people! How long? . . . Perhaps thirty years, and no one knew, and no one said, "Well done!" He had veiled his good deeds well, and accepted many a jest that must have cut him to the quick. Marget's heart began to warm to this unassuming man as it had not done even by George's chair.

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.



October 6

IT must have been a great joy to breathe the air in the periods of Renaissance, whether in Physics or in Letters — to live in the days that preceded the Reformation, when classical scholarship was revived and placed again before the world : to live in the days of Elizabethan Letters, and to feel the inspiration of Spenser and Shakespeare! Some of us know what it is to have seen the immense discoveries and bright hopefulness of physical science in the century.

The Cure of Souls.

October 7

LIFE, as Jesus understood it, consisting of Love and Sacrifice, does not belong to any age because it is the inhabitant of all. Its roots are struck into the unchanging and eternal. It has already a spiritual environment, and when this present state of things is removed Life will rise to its full height and find itself at home. This is Life which cannot be lost. Life to-day, it would have been Life when the Pyramids were new, it will be Life when the earth is an ice-cold ball. Life is contemporaneous with all the centuries, it anticipates and closes them. "Time is a parenthesis in eternity," says a fine old classic.

The Mind of the Master.



October 8

IF sin be a principle in a man's life, then it is evident that it cannot be affected by the most pathetic act in history exhibited from without; it must be met by an opposite principle working from within. If sin be selfishness, as Jesus taught, then it can only be overcome by the introduction of a spirit of self-renunciation. Jesus did not denounce sin: negative religion is always impotent. He replaced sin by virtue, which is a silent revolution. As the light enters, the darkness departs, and as soon as one renounced himself, he had ceased from sin.

The Mind of the Master.

October 9

CHARLIE knelt on the turf before the stone, and, taking off his hat, prayed God his sins might be forgiven, and that one day he might meet the trusting hearts that had not despaired of his return.

He rose uncomforted, however, and stood beneath the beech where Jamie Soutar had once lashed him for his unmanliness. Looking down, he saw the fields swept clean of grain; he heard the sad murmur of the water, that laughed at the shortness of life; withered leaves fell at his feet, and the October sun faded from the kirkyard. A chill struck to his heart, because there was none to receive his repentance, none to stretch out to him a human hand, and bid him go in peace.

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.



October 10

IT is a question whether one is wise to revisit any place where he has often been in happier times and see it desolate. For me, at least, it was a mistake, and the melancholy is still upon me. The deserted house falling at last to pieces, the overgrown garden, the crumbling paths, the gaping bridges over the little burns, and the loneliness, chilled one's soul.

Kate Carnegie.

October 11

THIS sublime passion did not die with the sacrifice of the martyrs, a mere hysterick of Religion, for it has continued unto this day the hidden spring of all sacrifice and beauty in the Christian life. The immense superstitions of the Middle Ages were redeemed by the love of Jesus, radiant in the life of St. Francis, reflected from the labours of the “Friends of God.” There was a glory over all the bitter controversies of the sixteenth century, because on the one side piety desired a spiritual access to Jesus’ Person; and on the other, piety longed for the comfort of His Real Presence.

The Mind of the Master.



October 12

“I ONCE heard him preach,” said a man of letters, who was referring to a distinguished clergyman, “and it was an excellent sermon — about the best in my experience.” “His text?” “I have not the ghost of an idea, nor do I remember his argument, nor anything he said.” “How do I know that it was good? Because before we left church he convinced us that God was love. I am not sure that I believe that to-day, but I believed it that morning. — Yes,” he added, “that man deserves his name, for he knows his business.”

The Cure of Souls.

October 13

IF any one is so fortunate as to hold in his heart and in its fulness the Catholic faith concerning Jesus, his richly developed character will be the unanswerable vindication of his creed. If one, less fortunate, should miss that full vision of Jesus, which is the inheritance of the saints, then it will be the less necessary to criticise his creed, since a frost-bitten and poverty-stricken character will be its swift condemnation.

The Mind of the Master.



October 14

WHEN we have got into our blood for ever the conception of God which crowns Him the King, Holy and Almighty, we are prepared upon a sound moral basis to receive Him as the loving and merciful Father. One therefore anticipates that the new doctrine will be based on the conception of the Divine Fatherhood — not the Fatherhood which throws away the Judgeship and the Righteousness of God, but the Fatherhood that gathers these up into a nobler and final unity, and that the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the revelation of the Father and the Head of the human race, will yield more blessed and practical fruit in the life of the race from year to year.

The Cure of Souls.

October 15

GIVING is a fine grace and an excellent discipline for character, but endless and pathetic begging for money, with all sorts of expedients from bazaars to tea-meetings, is not at all within the range of grace, and aids no one's character.

The Cure of Souls.

JESUS did not repeat the rôle of Moses. He did not forbid His disciples to steal or tell lies ; it would have been a waste of His power to teach the alphabet of morals. He takes morality for granted, and carves what Moses has hewn. His great discourse moves not in the sphere of duty but in the atmosphere of love.

The Mind of the Master.



October 16

DINNA fash wi' medicine ; gie her plenty o' fresh milk and plenty o' air. There's nae leevin' for a doctor wi' that Drumtochty air ; it hasna a marra in Scotland. It starts frae the Moray Firth and sweeps doon Badenoch, and comes ower the moor o' Rannoch and across the Grampians. There's the salt o' the sea, and the caller air o' the hills, and the smell o' the heather, and the bloom o' mony a flower in't. If there's nae disease in the organs o' the body, a puff o' Drumtochty air wud bring back a man frae the gates o' deith."

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.

October 17

JESUS knew that it was not possible to divide men into two classes by the foliage of the outer life, as it is seen from the highway. Few people are saints or devils in their daily conduct : most are a mixture of good and bad. Below the variety of action lies the unity of principle. Some people have grave faults and yet we believe they are good ; some are paragons of respectability and yet we are sure they are bad. No one would refuse St. Peter a place with Jesus, although he denied Him once with curses ; none propose a place with Jesus for Judas, although he only committed himself once in public. An instinct tells us the direction of the soul ; the trend of character.

The Mind of the Master.



October 18

ONE of the lassies, specially dressed for the occasion, was continually bringing in hot water and reserve tea-pots, till the doctor accused Drumsheugh of seven cups, and threatened him with the session for immoderate drinking ; and Drumsheugh hinted that the doctor was only one short himself. Simple fooling of country-folk, that would sound very poor beside the wit of the city, but who shall estimate the love in Burnbrae's homely room that evening ?

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.

October 19

CRITICISM has offended the Church by its pretentiousness, for its preachers were apt to speak as if they had a new Gospel. Of course they had nothing, and could have nothing, of the kind. They have given a large amount of information and they have removed some traditions, but a message for the soul criticism can never offer. The Gospel is a certain voice of God, which sounds from the first book of the Bible to the last, and any science which handles the body of the books does not come near the soul. The critic has established a debt of gratitude at the hands of the Church, but when he confounds himself with the evangelist he has forgotten his place.

The Cure of Souls.



October 20

SOME have imagined an earthly paradise for the race, where it would have remained ignorant of good and evil, without exertion, without hardship. Jesus saw with clearer eyes. He made no moan over a lost Eden, He knew that it is a steep road that leads to the stars. Jesus believed that the price of all real life is suffering, and that a man must sell all that he has to buy the pearl of great price.

The Mind of the Master.

October 21

THE pastor does not delay over the appearance and circumstances of a man any more than Christ did ; like his Master he pierces to the spiritual part, the real man. He is always impressed, and sometimes quite overwhelmed, by the value of the immortal soul — this soul, still plastic and unfired, for which he can do so much or so little. He trembles for it when he sees the destroyer hovering over it like a hawk poised in mid-air, and would fain have it gathered beneath Christ's wing.

The Cure of Souls.



October 22

THE thought of the Old Testament moves forward to the life of Jesus. Its conduct is revised by the commandments of Jesus ; its piety is crowned in Jesus' last discourses. We read the 53rd chapter of Isaiah in order that we may visit Calvary. The Ten Words are only eclipsed by the Law of Love. There is one passage dearer than the 23rd Psalm, and that is the 14th chapter of St. John's Gospel. The faith that would seek its guidance from the Patriarchs rather than from the Apostles, and quotes from history to qualify the Gospels, is elementary and undeveloped.

The Mind of the Master.

October 23

H E is a poor creature who cannot be angry, and who is not ready to challenge wanton evil-doers. The thunderstorm has its function, but let it be brief, and be followed by the clear shining after rain. Sarcasm serves so little purpose, and does so much mischief, that it had better be left out of the preacher's medicine-chest. People cannot be turned from sin by gibes, nor scourged into the Kingdom of God by sneers.

The Cure of Souls.



October 24

“T AK the minister o' Pitscourie noo; he's fair fozy wi' trokin' in his gairden an' feeding pigs, and hesna studied a sermon for thirty year.

“Sae what dis he dae, think ye? He havers for a whilie on the errors o' the day, and syne he says, ‘That's what man says, but what says the Apostle Paul? We shall see what the Apostle Paul says.’ He puts on his glasses, and turns up the passage, and reads maybe ten verses, and then he's aff on the jundy [trot] again. When a man hes naethin' tae say he's aye lang, and a've seen him gie half an oor o' passages, and anither half oor o' havers.”

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.

October 25

THERE are certain rights which are legal; there are certain rights which are natural. No law can take away the latter, nor can a man divest himself of them by any form of engagement; and among the inherent rights of a Christian man is his appeal to Jesus as the one Judge of truth. It has often lain dormant in the Church; it has at times been powerfully exercised. Some one discovers that the water of life is clearer and sweeter from the spring than in a cistern, and shows the grass-grown path to the spring.

The Mind of the Master.



October 26

WITHIN the heart of every true man the intention of the holy ministry is associated with romantic dreams and hopes. He does not expect a material reward, and he is prepared for hard work. He is willing to brave opposition and reproach to fulfil God's will; every sacrifice will have its compensation in those moments of reverent study when his heart suddenly burns within him and he knows Christ's presence is in the room, in hours when he can see the soul of his hearers leap into their faces in response to the Evangel, in days spent in carrying the Lord's consolation to the afflicted.

The Cure of Souls.

October 27

IT is the prophet who has roused the race from ignoble sleep, has fired its imagination with lofty ideals, has nerved it for costly sacrifices, has led it to victory. It is the prophet, above all, who, under Christ, has laid the foundations of the Church in every land, has restored her after periods of decay, has filled her with courage and hope. He is the teacher, comforter, fosterer, defender of his brethren, and therefore the chief office to which any man can be called is to declare the Will of God, and especially the Evangel of Christ.

The Cure of Souls.



October 28

"ANE o' ma wee lassies," expatiated Domsie, "fell comin' doon the near road frae Whinnie Knowe, and cuttit her cheek on the stones, and if Lachlan didna wash her face and comfort her; an' mair, he carried her a' the road tae the schule, and says he in his Hieland way, 'Here iss a brave little woman that hass hurt herself, but she will not be crying,' and he gave her a kiss and a penny tae buy some sweeties at the shop. It minded me o' the Gude Samaritan, fouks," and everybody understood that Lachlan had captured Domsie for life.

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.

October 29

IT was Jesus who summoned Love to meet the severe demands of Faith, and wedded for the first time the ideas of Passion and Righteousness. Hitherto Righteousness had been spotless and admirable, but cold as ice; Passion had been sweet and strong, but unchastened and wanton. Jesus suddenly identifies Righteousness with Himself, and has brought it to pass that no man can love Him without loving Righteousness. Jesus clothes Himself with the commandments, and each is transfigured into a grace.

The Mind of the Master.



October 30

ONE thing the minister must lay to his heart and impress on his people, and that is the perfect harmony between faith and criticism. Without any exception, the most reliable and brilliant scholars of our English-speaking communions have been, or are, believing and devout men, who rejoice to turn from the study of the literature to declare the Gospel of the Bible. It ought also to be pointed out, that the total results of criticism, when they converge upon a point, have been, not to obscure or belittle Christ, but rather to throw Him into supreme relief Whom all the prophets anticipated, Whom the apostles declared.

The Cure of Souls.

October 31

“MAN, Chairlie, it did me gude tae hear that ye hed played the man in Ameriky, an’ that ye didna forget the puir laddies o’ Drumtochty. Ay, Jamie telt me afore he dee’d, an’ prood he wes aboot ye. ‘Lily’s gotten her wish,’ he said; ‘a’ kent she wud.’

“He wes sure ye wud veesit the auld Glen some day, an’ wes feared there wudna be a freend tae gie ye a word. Ye wes tae slip awa tae Muirtown the nicht without a word, an’ nane o’s tae ken ye hed been here? Na, na, gin there be a cauld hearth in yir auld hame, there’s a warm corner in ma hoose for Lily’s brither,” and so they went home together.

When they arrived Saunders was finishing the last stack, and broke suddenly into speech.

“Ye thocht, Drumsheugh, we would never get that late puckle in, but here it is, safe and soond, an’ a’ll warrant it ’ill buke [bulk] as weel as ony in the threshin’.”

“Ye’re richt, Saunders, and a bonnie stack it maks;” and then Charlie Grant went in with Drumsheugh to the warmth and the kindly light, while the darkness fell upon the empty harvest-field, from which the last sheaf had been safely garnered.

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.

November

ANY bookman can estimate a library by a scent—if an expert he could even write out a catalogue of the books and sketch the appearance of the owner. Heavy odour of polished mahogany, Brussels carpets, damask curtains, and table-cloths ; then the books are kept within glass, consist of sets of standard works in half calf, and the owner will give you their cost wholesale to a farthing. Faint fragrance of delicate flowers, and Russia leather, with a hint of cigarettes ; prepare yourself for a marvellous wall-paper, etchings, bits of oak, limited editions, and a man in a velvet coat. Smell of paste and cloth binding and general newness means yesterday's books and a man racing through novels with a paper-knife. Those are only book-rooms by courtesy, and never can satisfy any one who has breathed the sacred air. It is a rich and strong spirit, not only filling the room, but pouring out from the door and possessing the hall, redeeming an opposite dining-room from grossness, and a more distant drawing-room from frivolity, and even lending a goodly flavour to bedrooms on upper floors. It is distilled from curious old duodecimos packed on high shelves out of sight, and blows over folios, with large clasps, that once stood in monastery libraries, and gathers a subtle sweetness from parchments that were illuminated in ancient scriptoriums that are now grass-grown, and is fortified with good old musty calf. *Kate Carnegie.*

November 1

IT is sufficient that a church should be nothing more at first than four strong walls and a sound roof, and that from year to year the people that have been blessed therein should give, one a painted window, another a piece of oak carving, a third a Holy Table, a fourth a font, till the church house be filled and beautified with the gifts of her children, and it is for the minister to insist on that morality which is the foundation of true beauty, and to move his people to bestow those gifts which form its crown.

The Cure of Souls.



November 2

JESUS addressed Himself to the unity of moral law in His first great public utterance, and only concluded His treatment before His arrest in the garden. His Sermon on the Mount was a luminous and comprehensive investigation of the ten words with a purpose — to detect their spiritual source and organic connection. It was the analysis of a code in order to identify the principle. It was the experimental search for a law, conducted with every circumstance of spiritual interest before a select audience ; it was a sustained suggestion by a score of illustrations that the law had been found.

The Mind of the Master.

November 3

“ **N**OO, there’s ma kirk, an’ we maunna forget it, for a’ ve been rael happy there. Ma sittin’ wes due the beginnin’ o’ the month, and a’ aye gied ten shillin’s tae the missions. An’, Jamie, they were speakin’ o’ presentin’ the minister wi’ some bit token o’ respect aifter bein’ twenty-five years here. Pit me doon for a poond — no’ ma name, ye ken ; that wud be forward : juist . . . ‘ A gratefu’ servant-lass.’ ”

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.



November 4

NEXT morning Sir Andrew and the minister were standing by Lily’s bedside, and only looked at him when he joined them.

“ Jamie . . . thank ye a’ . . . ower gude tae . . . a servant-lass . . . tell them . . . at hame.”

Each man bade her good-bye, and the minister said certain words which shall not be written.

“ Thae . . . weary stairs,” and she breathed heavily for a time ; then, with a sigh of relief, “ A’m comin’.”

“ Lily has reached the . . . landing,” said Sir Andrew, and as they went downstairs no man would have looked at his neighbour’s face for a ransom.

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.

November 5

WHEN people congratulate themselves because a sermon has been clear, it really means that it has been theological ; and this may be true, although there be not one word of theology in it from beginning to end. The vine hid the trellis-work.

The Cure of Souls.



November 6

NO one has yet discovered the word Jesus ought not to have said, none suggested the better word He might have said. No action of His has shocked our moral sense ; none has fallen short of the ideal. He is full of surprises, but they are all the surprises of perfection. You are never amazed, one day by His greatness, the next by His littleness. You are ever amazed that He is incomparably better than you could have expected. He is tender without being weak, strong without being coarse, lowly without being servile. He has conviction without intolerance, enthusiasm without fanaticism, holiness without Pharisaism, passion without prejudice. This Man alone never made a false step, never struck a jarring note. His life alone moved on those high levels where local limitations are transcended and the absolute Law of Moral Beauty prevails. It was life at its highest.

The Mind of the Master.

November 7

THE very church has a hold on the pious mind, that grows with the years and lasts till death removes the man to the upper sanctuary. People with prosaic minds see him on Sunday morning passing a dozen fashionable suburban churches, and trudging down to a dingy place in the city, and they refer it to his old-fashioned ways and that cat-spirit which clings to a building. They do him less than justice ; they have too little imagination. He has his own reasons, this unsentimental, matter-of-fact man.

The Cure of Souls.

November 8

Moses said, "Do this or do that." Jesus refrained from regulations — He proposed that we should love. Jesus, while hardly mentioning the word, planted the idea in His disciples' minds, that Love was Law. For three years He exhibited and enforced Love as the principle of life, until, before He died, they understood that all duty to God and man was summed up in Love. Progress in the moral world is ever from complexity to simplicity. First one hundred duties ; afterwards they are gathered into ten commandments ; then they are reduced to two : love of God and love of man ; and, finally, Jesus says His last word : "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you."

The Mind of the Master.

November 9

FOR one to be a Christian, it is only necessary that he be loyal; but to be a Christian of the first order, he must be mystical. Jesus still comes to us in our outer life, and blessed is the man who arises and follows Him whithersoever He goes. Jesus still comes to the door of the soul, and that man is most blessed who receives the Lord into his guest-chamber.

The Upper Room.

A COURSE of sermons on the metaphysics of faith, followed by another on the philosophy of prayer, will go far to make infidels of a congregation. One wants his drinking-water taken through a filter-bed, but greatly objects to gravel in his glass. *The Cure of Souls.*



November 10

“YE’LL no’ be angry, but a’ telt Marget Hoo ae day aboot oor tribble an’ ma houp o’ Chairlie — for ye canna look at Marget an’ no’ want tae unburden yersel’ — an’ she said, ‘Dinna be ashamed o’ yir dreams, Lily ; they ’ll a’ come true some day, for we canna think better than God wull dae.’ ”

“Marget Hoo is nearer the hert o’ things than onybody in the Glen, an’ a ’m prayin’ she may be richt. Get the bukes ; it’s time for oor readin’.” *The Days of Auld Lang Syne.*

November 11

THE passion for Jesus has no analogy in comparative religion ; it has no parallel in human experience. It is a flame of unique purity and intensity. Thomas does not believe that Jesus is the Son of God, or that, more than any other man, He can escape the hatred of fanaticism ; but he must share the fate of Jesus. "Let us also go," said this morbid sceptic, "that we may die with Him." At the sight of His face seven devils went out of Mary Magdalene ; for the blessing of His visit, a chief publican gave half his goods to the poor. When a man of the highest order met Jesus he was lifted into the heavenly places and became a Christed man, whose eyes saw with the vision of Christ, whose pulse beat with the heart of Christ.

The Mind of the Master.



November 12

IT is a pleasant occupation to watch the clouds wreathing themselves around a mountain, and one catches lovely glimpses when the sun shines through the mist. But billowy masses of words, with an occasional exquisite revelation, is not profitable preaching, and, at its best, it can never hold the people who are not especially poetical, but have a passionate desire to know what the speaker means.

The Cure of Souls.

November 13

THURSDAY opens well, and the minister begins to work for Sunday, when a visitor comes, and then a crowd — a young lady who is anxious to be a nurse ; a young man (who was once at the young men's sermon) to get a testimonial for a situation ; a member of the church with no business, who wished to introduce a country friend ; the travelling secretary of some third-rate society, whose time is paid ; an elderly person who got good from one of the minister's sermons in a strange church, and borrows five shillings.

The Cure of Souls.



November 14

"WELL, ye see he 's terrible prood o' his feenishes, and this is ane o' them :

" "Heaven, ma brethren, will be far grander than the hoose o' ony earthly potentate, for there ye will no longer eat the flesh of bulls nor drink the blood o' goats, but we shall sook the juicy pear and scoop the loocious meelon. Amen."

" He hes nae mair sense o' humour than an owl, and a' aye haud that a man without humour sudna be allowed intae a poopit.

" A' hear that they have nae examination in humour at the college ; it 's an awfu' want, for it wud keep oot mony a dreich body."

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.

November 15

“ ‘WHATNA place is this, George ? ’ an’ he taks aff the cover an’ hauds up the picture. It wud hae dune ye gude tae hae seen the licht in the laddie’s een. ‘Athens,’ he cried, an’ then he reached oot his white hand tae Drumsheugh, but naething wes said.

“ They were at it the hale forenoon, Geordie showin’ the Temple the Greeks set up tae Wisdom, an’ the theatre in the shadow of the hill whar the Greek prophets preached their sermons ; an’ as a’ gaed oot an’ in, Geordie wud read a bonnie bit, and Domsie himsel’ cudna hae been mair interested than Drumsheugh. The deein’ scholar an’ the auld fairmer. . . .”

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.



November 16

THOSE mornings given to Plato, that visit to Florence where he got an insight into Italian art, that hard-won trip to Egypt the birthplace of civilisation, his sustained acquaintance with Virgil, his by-study of physical science, his taste in music, the subtlest and most religious of the arts, all now rally to his aid. Greek philosophy clarifies the thinking, Andrea Del Sarto illustrates it ; a poet suggests a musical line ; Faraday points out a parallel between the worlds of nature and spirit.

The Cure of Souls.

November 17

WHOSOEVER holds the pastoral office must learn to keep secrets, and must be on his guard against careless speech. What he has to fear is not dishonour through wilful breach of trust, but mere leakiness. The pastor does not consider his own wife a privileged person in this matter, for though she might be the most prudent and reticent of women, yet it would embarrass his people to know that their secrets were shared with her. The high honour of doctors, who carry in their breasts so many social tragedies, is an example to be followed by the clerical profession.

The Cure of Souls.



November 18

JESUS had to contend with a more inexcusable misuse which binds up the life of a man, not with his body, but with his material environment. According to this squalid definition, Life is made up of circumstances ; if they are pleasant, the man has an easy life ; if they are adverse, he has a hard life. Life is stated in terms of food and raiment, and goods and houses. Against this degradation of life Jesus lifted up His voice in a protest which admits of no answer. He was never weary of reminding His disciples that such things could not constitute Life, and were, indeed, so unworthy as to be beneath care.

The Mind of the Master.

November 19

IF anything could rouse a slattern and move him to play the man, it would be his wife's faith in him. All over the world, within and without the ministry, hard-working and self-sacrificing women are covering useless vagabonds and apologising for their faults, and assigning them to ill-health, and prophesying the great things they will yet do. God grant the man may do something for that woman's sake.

The Cure of Souls.



November 20

NO teacher ever gave such pledges of divine authority as Jesus; no people could have been better prepared for His Evangel than the Jews. They had been set apart as in a cloister that they might hear the Divine voice, and a succession of prophets had come from the presence of God to declare the Divine Will. A nation had been trained in the hope of the Messiah to wait for the dayspring from on high and the fulness of God's kingdom. It might have been expected that this well-tilled field would have been open soil for Jesus' words, and one dares to believe that there might have been an auspicious seedtime had the Jews passed, say, from Isaiah to Jesus, or had Jesus come while the glow of Daniel's visions was still fresh.

The Mind of the Master.

November 21

"**Y**E mind the bit lassiky"—MacLure would tell all when he was at it—"that lived wi' Mary Robertson, and Jamie Soutar made sic a wark aboot, for her mither wes deid; she wes chokin' wi' her tribble, an' a' took her on ma knee, for Daisy and me were aye chief.

"‘Am a’ gaein’ tae dee the day?’ she said, an a’ cudna tell a lee lookin’ intae yon een.

"‘Ye’re no’ feared, dautie,’ a’ said; ‘ye’ll sune be hame.’

"‘Haud me ticht, then, Docksie’—that wes her name for me—‘an’ mither ’ill tak me oot o’ yir airms.’ . . . The Almighty wud see the wee lassie wesna pit tae shame, or else . . . that’s no His name.’”

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.



November 22

"**Y**OU an’ me are no’ like Burnbrae and the bairnie, Weelum; a’m feared at times aboot . . . the hame-comin’.”

"‘A’ dinna wunner, Drumsheugh, a’m often the same masel’; we’re baith truant laddies, and maybe we’ll get oor paiks, an’ it ’ill dae us gude. But be that as it may, we maun juist risk it, an’ a’m houpin’ the Almighty ’ill no be waur tae us than oor mither when the sun gaes doon and the nicht wind sweeps ower the hill.’”

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.

November 23

A HUNDRED thousand faces pass before your eyes and are forgotten, mere physical impressions; you see one, and it is in your heart for ever, as you saw it the first time. Wavy black hair, a low, straight forehead, hazel eyes with long eyelashes, a perfectly-shaped Grecian nose, a strong mouth whose upper lip had a curve of softness, a clear-cut chin with one dimple, small ears set high in the head, and a rich creamy complexion—that was what flashed upon Carmichael.

Kate Carnegie.



November 24

THEY helped Milton out of bed next Thursday, and he sat in silence at a gable window that commanded the bare fields. Twenty ploughs were cutting the stubble into brown ridges, and the crows followed the men as they guided the shares with stiff resisting body, while Drumsheugh could be seen going from field to field with authority.

"What's this for?" inquired Milton at length; "naebody askit them, an' . . . them an' me hevna been pack [friendly] thae laist twa years."

"It's a love-darg," said his wife; "because ye've been sober [ill], they juist want to show kindness, bein' oor neeburs."

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.

November 25

"**D**ID ye never want tae . . . tell her?" and the doctor looked curiously at Drumsheugh.

"Juist aince, Weelum, in her gairden, an' the day Geordie dee'd. Marget thankit me for the college fees and bit expenses a' hed paid. 'A faither cudna hae been kinder tae ma laddie,' she said, an' she laid her hand on ma airm. 'Ye're a gude man, a' see it clear this day, an' . . . ma hert is . . . warm tae ye.' A' ran oot o' the gairden. A' might hae broken doon. Oh, gin Geordie hed been ma ain laddie, an' Marget . . . ma wife!"

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.



November 26

ACCORDING to the mind of Jesus, the foresight which prepares one for the future life is a certain attitude of soul. No person, it may be assumed, would refuse the reversion of a blessed future, with its high hopes of the freedom of holiness and the unfettered service of the Divine Will, but many persons are not minded to subordinate to its unseen excellence the solid possession of the present. They have made themselves so absolutely at home among the principles and rewards of a material world that they would be out of place amid the very different conditions and occupations of a spiritual world. It is this unfitness that will deny them a habitation.

The Mind of the Master.

November 27

NO photograph quite represents the face that was taken, or leaves the studio untouched. Certain lines have to be modified, certain blots to be removed. It will be a very gracious sermon that needs no retouching. Line by line the sermon has to be read over with the faces of his congregation before him, so that the minister may hear how it sounds in the living environment. Many things are incisive and telling, clever and sparkling, on paper, which we feel will not do face to face. They are now too telling, too clever.

The Cure of Souls.



November 28

JESUS and His disciples share the same Life. He is the "Bread of Life," and they "eat." Jesus with this startling image flashes a description of Life and answers the question, ever in the background of one's mind, "What is Life?" It is fellowship with the Spirit of Jesus, something that cannot be estimated by the beating of the pulse, or the inventory of a man's possessions, that must be tested by conscience and the intangible scales of the Kingdom of Heaven. It will lie in a certain mind, in a certain ruling motive, in a certain trend of character, in a certain obedience of will, in a certain passion for goodness, the same as that of Jesus.

The Mind of the Master.

November 29

"A' never dreamed o' this, an' a'm no' worthy o' sic love, whereof I hev hed much fruit an' ye hev only pain."

"Ye're wrang, Marget, for the joy hes gaen ower the pain, an' a've hed the greater gain. Love roosed me tae wark an' fecht, wha might hae been a ne'er-dae-weel. Love savit me frae greed o' siller an' a hard hert. Love kept me clean in thocht an' deed, for it was ever Marget by nicht an' day. If a'in a man the day, ye did it, though ye might never hae kent it. It's little a' did for ye, but ye've dune a'thing for me . . . Marget."

After a moment he went on —

"Twenty year ago a' cudna hae spoken wi' ye safely, nor taken yir man's hand without a grudge ; but there's nae sin in ma love this day, an' a' wudna be ashamed though yir man heard me say, 'A' love ye, Marget.'"

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.



November 30

IT happens sometimes that a sermon fails because although the carving is excellent the wood is worthless, but just as often because, although the wood be richly grained, the artist has scamped his labour. A noble and inspiring idea is only a promise of success, and the issue hangs on skill and patience.

The Cure of Souls.

December

WINTER has certain mornings which redeem weeks of misconduct, when the hoar frost during the night has re-silvered every branch and braced the snow upon the ground, and the sun rises in ruddy strength and drives out of sight every cloud and mist, and moves all day through an expanse of unbroken blue, and is reflected from the dazzling whiteness of the earth as from a mirror. Such a sight calls a man from sleep with authority, and makes his blood tingle, and puts new heart in him, and banishes the troubles of the night. Other mornings Winter joins in the conspiracy of principalities and powers to daunt and crush the human soul. No sun is to be seen, and the grey atmosphere casts down the heart, the wind moans and whistles in fitful gusts, the black clouds hang low in threatening masses, now and again a flake of snow drifts in the wind. A storm is near at hand, not the thunder-shower of summer, with warm rain and the kindly sun in ambush, but dark and blinding snow, through which even a gamekeeper cannot see six yards, and in which weary travellers lie down to rest and die.

Kate Carnegie.

December 1

CERTAIN churches, owing to high position and ancient descent, may think too mightily of themselves, and this came to my mind once when the beadle of a church in my own communion inquired of me where I was settled, and whether I was actually ordained, preparing me for a thin audience, as the Doctor was known to be from home, but cheering me before next service with the information that a fair number of people had returned—a circumstance at which he could not conceal his astonishment.

The Cure of Souls.



December 2

EVERY reader of the Gospels has marked the sympathy of Jesus with children. How He watched their games! How angry He was with His disciples for belittling them! How He used to warn men, whatever they did, never to hurt a little child! How grateful were children's praises when all others had turned against Him! One is apt to admire the beautiful sentiment, and to forget that children were more to Jesus than helpless gentle creatures to be loved and protected. They were His chief parable of the Kingdom of heaven. As a type of character the Kingdom was like unto a little child, and the greatest in the Kingdom would be the most child-like.

The Mind of the Master.

December 3

CRITICISM has sinned through *uncharitableness*; for some of the pioneers of the new school have forgotten good manners, and have not carried themselves respectfully to the past. While a discoverer in physics is ever grateful for the work done by his predecessors, and corrects their mistakes with humility, recognising that he stands on their shoulders, and that his results will also one day be revised, the biblical critic has been inclined to treat the old scholarship with unconcealed contempt, and to expose its errors with malignant satisfaction.

The Cure of Souls.



December 4

PROGRESS by suffering is one of Jesus' most characteristic ideas, and, like every other, is embodied in the economy of human nature and confirmed by the sweep of human history. The Cross marks every departure: the Cross is the condition of every achievement. Modern Europe has emerged from the Middle Ages, Christianity from Judaism, Judaism from Egypt, Egypt from barbarism, with throes of agony. Humanity has fought its way upwards at the point of the bayonet, torn and bleeding, yet hopeful and triumphant.

The Mind of the Master.

December 5

A SERMON is more than a cunning creation ; it is an inspiration, not so much dead stuff laboriously fitted together, but a tree whose leaf is green, which yieldeth its fruit in due season.

The Cure of Souls.

A LAS ! he need not take such care, for the walk was now as the border with grass, and the gate was lying open, and the dead house stared at him with open, unconscious eyes, and knew him not.

Kate Carnegie.



December 6

"WHAT 'ill become o's when ye're no here tae gie a' hand in time o' need ? we 'ill take ill wi' a stranger that disna ken ane o's frae anither."

"It 's a' for the best, Paitrick, an' ye 'ill see that in a whilie. A 've kent fine that ma day wes ower, an' that ye sud hae a younger man.

"A' did what a' cud tae keep up wi' the new medicine, but a' hed little time for readin', an' nane for traivellin'.

"A 'm the last o' the auld schule, an' a' ken as weel as onybody thet a' wesna sae dainty an' fine-mannered as the town doctors. Ye took me as a' wes, an' naebody ever cuist up tae me that a' wes a plain man. Na, na ; ye 've been rael kind an' conseederate a' thaec years."

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.

December 7

FOR the innocent gaiety and lighter follies of youth the pastor has a vast toleration, for the sudden disasters of manhood an unfailing charity, for the unredeemed tragedies of age a great sorrow. It is a hard fight for every one, and it is not his to judge or condemn ; his it is to understand, to help, to comfort — for these people are his children, his pupils, his patients ; they are the sheep Christ has given him, for whom Christ died. *The Cure of Souls.*



December 8

ACCORDING to Jesus, a well-conditioned child illustrates better than anything else on earth the distinctive features of Christian character. Because he does not assert nor aggrandise himself. Because he has no memory for injuries, and no room in his heart for a grudge. Because he has no previous opinions, and is not ashamed to confess his ignorance. Because he can imagine, and has the key of another world, entering in through the ivory gate and living amid the things unseen and eternal. The new society of Jesus was a magnificent imagination, and he who entered it must lay aside the world standards and ideals of character, and become as a little child.

The Mind of the Master.

December 9

“I PRAYED that the message sent through me to your flock, John, might be love. It hath pleased the Great Shepherd that I should lead the sheep by strange paths, but I desired that it be otherwise when I came for the first time to Drumtochty.

“Two days did I spend in the woods, for the stillness of winter among the trees leaveth the mind disengaged for the Divine word, and the first day my soul was heavy as I returned, for this only was laid upon me, ‘vessels of wrath, fitted to destruction.’”

Kate Carnegie



December 10

“NEXT day the sun was shining pleasantly in the wood, and it came to me that clouds had gone from the face of God, and as I wandered among the trees a squirrel sat on a branch within reach of my hand and did not flee. Then I heard a voice, ‘I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.’

“It was, in an instant, my hope that this might be God’s word by me, but I knew not it was so till the Evangel opened up on all sides, and I was led into the outgoings of the eternal love after so moving a fashion that I dared to think that grace might be effectual even with me . . . with me.”

Kate Carnegie.

December 11

CONGREGATIONAL patriotism demands that, whatever differences of opinion the minister may have with his people, or whatever fatherly rebukes he may feel it his duty to give them, he should neither say one word against them outside, nor allow any reflection to be made upon them by a stranger. No man exposes his wife's faults, and no one dares criticise a wife to her husband ; and people and minister are united in a sacred bond, sharing a common love and reputation. And the same Church feeling should keep the people true to their minister.

The Cure of Souls.



December 12

ALL our life from infancy to age we are in the school of love, and never does human nature so completely shed the slough of selfishness, or wear so generous a guise, or offer such ungrudging service as when under this sway. Here is stored to hand the latent dynamic for a spiritual enterprise; it only remains to make the connection. Do you wish a cause to endure hardness, to rejoice in sacrifice, to accomplish mighty works, to retain for ever the dew of its youth ? Give it the best chance, the sanction of Love.

The Mind of the Master.

December 13

ALL machinery, however well conceived and enthusiastically worked, will be unblessed and useless unless the Church have spiritual aims, and be touched with heavenliness, unless she be cleansed from false ideals and a worldly spirit.

The Cure of Souls.



December 14

WHAT has to be laid down in the strongest terms and held in perpetual remembrance is that Jesus gave in substance final truth, and that no one, apostle or saint, could or did add anything to the original deposit, however much he might expound or enforce it. This is the only position which secures a consistent and authoritative standard by which later teaching can be judged, and, apart from Jesus' own words, it is established by two arguments. One is probability or the fitness of things. Is it likely that Jesus, who came to declare the Divine Will and reveal the Father, would leave any truth of the first magnitude to be told by His servants? It is to be expected that prophets should anticipate Jesus' Gospel and that apostles should apply it; but it were amazing if either should supplement Jesus.

The Mind of the Master.

December 15

THE kingdom of God can only rule over willing hearts ; it has no helots within its borders. It advances by individual conversion, it stands in individual consecration. Laws can do but little for this cause ; the sword less than nothing. The kingdom will come in a land when it has come in the hearts of the people — neither sooner nor later. *The Mind of the Master.*



December 16

“ **Y**OU hef done a beautiful deed this day, Maister Carmichael ; and the grace of God must hef been exceeding abundant in your heart. It iss this man that asks your forgiveness, for I wass full of pride, and did not speak to you as an old man should; but God iss my witness that I would hef plucked out my right eye for your sake. You will say every word God gives you, and I will take as much as God gives me, and there will be a covenant between us as long as we live.”

They knelt together on the earthen floor of that Highland cottage, the old school and the new, before one Lord, and the only difference in their prayers was that the young man prayed they might keep the faith once delivered unto the saints, while the burden of the old man’s prayer was that they might be led into all truth.

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.

December 17

HE was married in that church, and there he offered his children to God. During his great trial it was the word he heard in that church which sustained him, and down its aisles he has carried the holy vessels of the Sacrament for thirty years. He is poor who has no sacred places on earth, and this is to the man as the gate of heaven.

The Cure of Souls.



December 18

WHEN Jesus explained that He had kept nothing back, and yet had much more to give, He was not contradicting Himself, but only distinguishing between the substance and the development of truth. One might say with perfect accuracy that a seed contains the plant — stem, ears and full corn — and that when one gives the seed he gives all. Yet this is not the denial of the spring, and the summer, and the autumn time. After the same fashion it may be truly said that if any speaker should sow a living idea in the mind of a receptive hearer, and that idea were afterwards cast into various forms and carried into great actions, both words and deeds ought to be assigned to the original giver. The germ has the potency, it has also the very shape of all the coming life.

The Mind of the Master.

December 19

SOME have not been content to hold Jesus anywhere save in the room which is nearest to the sky, which has windows to the grey east and the golden west, and all day long is full of warm light ; and when Jesus, wearied after many fruitless journeys, is brought within the door, He is satisfied, as one who has come home. This is sometimes called St. John's room, because he wrote pleasantly about it and the things he had seen from its windows ; and no one will gainsay that it is the Upper Room. For work is good, and righteousness is good, and knowledge is good, but best of all is love. And all the other rooms in the soul are gathered under love. Be sure he will not fail in sacrifice who loves the Lord ; his conscience will be tender that is bathed in love, and no one can know deep mysteries who does not love. Love is Jesus' chosen guest-chamber, and he that has Jesus for a guest has power, and goodness, and truth, and God.

The Upper Room.



December 20

NO one can hope to teach religion, in even its simplest form, with permanent success, without a competent knowledge of theology, any more than a physician can practise medicine without a knowledge of physiology, or an engineer build a bridge who has not learned mathematics.

The Cure of Souls.

December 21

NOTHING is easier than to create a religion ; one only needs self-confidence and foolscap paper. An able Frenchman sat down in his study and produced Positivism, which some one pleasantly described as Catholicism *minus* Christianity. It stimulated conversation in superior circles for years, and only yesterday Mr. Frederic Harrison was explaining to Professor Huxley that this ingenious invention of M. Comte ought to be taken seriously.

The Mind of the Master.



December 22

ONE of the most suggestive pictures of Italian Art represents the meeting of St. Dominic and St. Francis. St. Dominic belonged to that order which was charged with the development and conservation of doctrine, and who, on account of their theological bitterness and often unreasoning persecution, were called the "hounds of the Lord." St. Francis, as a great French critic declared, was the most beautiful Christian character since the days of Jesus, and it was he who revived religion. In this picture St. Dominic, the author and defender of dogma, and St. Francis, the humble disciple and exemplifier of Jesus Christ, have met, and, flinging their arms round one another's necks, they kiss each other.

The Cure of Souls.

December 23

"WHEEL, gin the woman leaves the man
an' passes intae the ither warld, is she
deid, think ye, neeburs, an' is she no' his wife?
An' mair nor that, are the twa no' nearer than
ever, an' . . . dearer?"

"Ye'll be sayin' in yir hearts, it's no' for
Jamie Soutar tae be speakin' like this, him 'at's
been alane a' his days; but a've ma ain thochts,
an' the deepest thing, ay, an' the bonniest, in
the warld is a man an' a woman ane in love
for ever."

The Days of Auld Lang Syne.



December 24

FORESIGHT confers distinction on every
effort of man, and raises it a degree. It
elevates economy into providence; it broadens
business into enterprise; with this addition
politics become statesmanship, and literature
prophecy. Life gains perspective and atmos-
phere; it is reinforced by unseen hopes and
rewards. The burden of the future becomes a
balance in life, tempering the intoxication of
joy with the cares of to-morrow, and softening
the bitterness of sorrow with its compensations.
Foresight, sending on its spies into the land
of promise, returns to brace and cheer every
power of the soul, and becomes the mother of
all hardy and strenuous virtues, of self-restraint,
and self-denial, of sacrifice and patience.

The Mind of the Master.

December 25

THE incarnation was an act of sacrifice, so patent and so brilliant that it has arrested every mind. It was sacrifice unto the lowest and therefore life in the highest, an outburst and climax of Life. But Creation is also Sacrifice, since it is God giving Himself; and Providence is Sacrifice, since it is God revealing Himself. Grace is Sacrifice, since it is God girding Himself and serving. With God, as Jesus declares Him, Life is an eternal procession of gifts, a costly outpouring of Himself, an unwearied suffering of Love. To live is to love, to love is to suffer, and to suffer is to rejoice with a joy that fills the heart of God from age to age.

The Mind of the Master.



December 26

IT is good to remember that, however cold and detached from life any doctrine may seem to us in our day, it must once have expressed the profound conviction of believing Christians, and that the kernel contained in its husk is eternal. There is no doctrine of the first order which does not enshrine a living idea of religion.

The Cure of Souls.

December 27

SIX disciples, and for them all one Lord, who unveils Judas, sending him forth to finish his work and to die of remorse; who rebukes the self-confidence of Peter and foretells his bitter humiliation; who takes Thomas by the hand and leads him through the darkness; who offers to Philip the sure evidence of His life and works; who loosens the bonds of Judas not Iscariot, and brings him into a large place; who satisfies John with Himself and His love,—one glorious Christ who is unto each disciple what he needed and more than he imagined, a place of “broad rivers and streams,” Judge, Saviour, Prophet, Master, Deliverer, Friend.

The Upper Room.



December 28

JESUS also believed in man, and therein He differed from the pessimists of His own day. The Pharisees regarded the mass of people as moral refuse, the unavoidable waste from the finished product of Pharisaism. With Jesus the common people were the raw material for the Kingdom of God, rich in the possibilities of sainthood.

The Mind of the Master.

December 29

If a minister feels it his duty to advance any new view, his style of speech ought to be especially cautious and considerate, because he must give a shock to many good people, and is in danger of shaking the faith of some. When a liberal in theology is bitter and intolerant, it is a satire on his position, and any disaster which follows has been earned.

The Cure of Souls.



December 30

It is the fond imagination of many pious minds that the basis of spiritual unity must lie in the reason, and stand in uniformity of doctrine. This unfortunate idea has been the poisoned spring of all the dissensions that have torn Christ's body, from the day when Eastern Christians fought in the streets about His Divinity to the long years when Europe was drenched in blood about His lovely Sacraments. It is surely a very ghastly irony that the immense sorrow of the world has been infinitely increased by the fierce distractions of that society which Jesus intended to be the peacemaker, and that Christian divisions should have arisen from the vain effort after an ideal which Jesus never once had within His vision.

The Mind of the Master.

December 31

"A'M ready noo, an' a 'll get ma kiss when
mither comes; a' wish she wud come,
for a'm tired an' wantin' tae sleep.

"Yon's her step . . . an' she's carryin' a
licht in her hand; a' see it through the door.

"Mither! a' kent ye wudna forget yir laddie,
for ye promised tae come, an' a 've feenished ma
psalm.

"And in God's house for evermore
My dwelling-place shall be.

"Gie me the kiss, mither, for a've been
waitin' for ye, an' a 'll sune be asleep."

The grey morning light fell on Drumsheugh,
still holding his friend's cold hand, and staring
at a hearth where the fire had died down into
white ashes; but the peace on the doctor's face
was of one who rested from his labours.

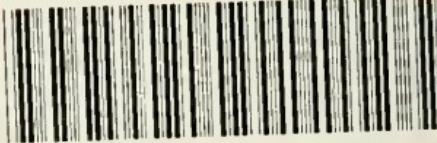
Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.

THE Kingdom of God cometh to a man when he sets up Jesus' Cross in his heart, and begins to live what Mr. Laurence Oliphant used to call "the life." It passes on its way when that man rises from table and girds himself and serves the person next him. Yesterday the kingdom was one man, now it is a group. From the one who washes to the one whose feet are washed the kingdom grows and multiplies. It stands around us on every side, — not in Pharisees nor in fanatics, not in noise nor tumult, but in modest and Christ-like men. One can see it in their faces, and catch it in the tone of their voices. And if one has eyes to see and ears to hear, then let him be of good cheer, for the kingdom of God is come. It is the world-wide state, whose law is the Divine will, whose members obey the spirit of Jesus, whose strength is goodness, whose heritage is God.

The Mind of the Master.



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